

**NEWS UPDATE**

**GDF MEETING**  
**14<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2004**

**Present:** Tony Burton (Rethink & Stroud Carers), Colin Parry, Robert rep for Froster Manor, Lynne Whitehead, Rosemary Harris, Tracey Dabbs (Ros's P.A.), Robert Harris, Gerald Tween, Claire Chiswell, Ros Champion (LIGS), Robert Lewis, Home Farm Trust Committee, Alison Wheatley, Home Farm Trust Committee; John Watkins, Home Farm Trust Users Rep., Paul Greenbank, Rollo Alderwick (Parkinson Society), Sue McClung

**Apologies:** Alan Finney, Chair of GLS; Ken Shaw GLS & rep for SWDEN; Kate Fenwick, SENCE; David Bennett, Cobalt Unit Appeal Fund; Diggory Seacome, CBC Cclo; Sue Blakeley, Glos City Cclr; Sally Middleton, Inclusion Officer Library Service

**Guest Speakers:** Rebecca Gorton, Community Partnerships Housing Support Officer; Kath Chamberlain, Community Partnerships Manager

**Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment Housing Strategy**

Rebecca began by advising the group of the role of Community Partnerships, in particular their responsibility for developing Partnerships to ensure a holistic approach to delivering Housing and related support solutions to vulnerable people in the Borough.

A series of partnership specialist housing strategies to focus on delivering housing and housing related support services to specific communities within Cheltenham have already been developed and they are about to embark on developing a Physical disability and sensory impairment housing strategy. She explained the value of working in partnership and advised the group that they had asked to address the Forum to advise on how they intend to go about developing the strategy, to spark debate, listen to the Forums' experiences and get initial feedback, issues, contacts and maybe volunteers to help develop the strategy and went on to explain how need and demand would be identified and mapped from a number of sources. This included:

- Information gathered from users will include questions on their present accommodation situation, to determine whether it is sufficient to their needs.
- Data will also be collected on the use of disabled facility grants. Other useful data will come from our housing register with figures from the waiting list on how many people are waiting to be re-housed in adapted properties.
- These data sources will provide information on the demand for adapted housing in Cheltenham. The next stage of the process is to map the existing provision.
- To do this they intend to survey all housing associations with property in Cheltenham. Information gathered by these surveys would include, how many properties they have in their stock to different adaptation standards, how many adapted properties are currently inhabited by households who do not need those adaptations, and whether they presently have anyone waiting for adapted properties.

This information will then be used as a foundation for developing a partnership strategy.

Following the presentation a number of questions were raised from the floor.

"Gloucestershire Lifestyles (GLS) prepares and issues notes of the Gloucestershire Disability Forum (GDF) with due care, but cannot accept responsibilities for any reporting errors. Views reported are those of the presenters and do not necessarily reflect those of either GLS or GDF."

**Guest Speaker:** Kate Griffiths, Community Transport Projects Officer GCC

The aim of community transport is to transport socially excluded people.

**What is community transport?** An unconventional transport service provided by voluntary groups to meet the need commercial services do not. The organisations are funded through a variety of sources including Gloucestershire County Council and The Rural Transport Partnership.

**Who is community transport for?**

People without their own transport who:

- Are elderly and/or frail or
- Have a disability (permanent or temporary) or
- Need to use a wheelchair
- Able-bodied people who do not have access to public transport and do not own a car or have frequent/convenient access to one.

**How is transport provided?**

Community transport can take 3 main forms:

- Dial A Ride (DAR)  
Wheelchair accessible minibuses provide door-to-door transport upon telephone request. Passengers must be registered members.
- Voluntary Car Schemes (VCS)  
VCSs are provided by volunteer drivers using their own cars to transport those unable to access public transport.
- Community Buses  
A community bus is a minibus purchased by a voluntary organisation and operated to a scheduled timetable. All drivers are entirely voluntary. A community bus is often loaned out to other voluntary groups for activities benefiting the local community.
- Journeys  
The voluntary organisations determine the type of journey they will provide, typical outings include shopping trips, medical appointments, welfare visits, lunch clubs and transport to Residential Homes and Day Centres

Community transport passengers made 215,126 journeys last year.

**Community transport in Gloucestershire**

There is community transport provision in each of the County's six districts though there are areas in the Forest of Dean, Stroud and the Cotswolds without any community transport provision. Countywide there are:

- 9 dial A rides;
- 10 voluntary car schemes;
- 5 community buses.

For further information please contact:

Katie Griffiths Tel: 01452 425334 Email: [communitytransport@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:communitytransport@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

**GDF Rep on the Assembly for Voluntary & Community Sector Board**

There being no other nominations for the post Sue McClung was asked by the delegates present to take on the role which she has been holding until the due process of selection had been conducted.

**Announcements:**

1. SW DISABILITY EQUALITY NETWORK MEETING 16<sup>th</sup> March in Torquay – Ken Shaw hopes to attend
2. Working Together an NHS conference is being held in the Bescot Stadium Walsall on 25<sup>th</sup> March First 50 tickets free
3. A reminder of the excellent training available through FLODA lots of different subject of importance to the Voluntary Sector Ring 01452-332424 or visit their website: [www.gloucestercvs.org.uk/training](http://www.gloucestercvs.org.uk/training)
4. Cotswold District Council refused a grant of £300 to Cirencester Access Group. GLS have sent a letter of support

5. David Drew has written regarding the future of Standish Hospital site. He urges all voluntary sector groups to support the suggestion of the site being operated as a mutual group.
6. Gloucestershire Resource Centre – Scrap Store Tel 01452-504442 or e-mail [grc@resourceful.com](mailto:grc@resourceful.com)
7. Gloucestershire Advocacy Support Service (GASS) offers CRB checks to the voluntary sector in Gloucestershire. Contact Jeanette Bates on 01453-332414 or e-mail [gass@gloslifestyles.co.uk](mailto:gass@gloslifestyles.co.uk) for more information.

I would like to thank our speakers for supplying me with their notes for this Newsletter because for the first time since 1998 I had no one to take notes of the meeting for me. This was due to staff long-term sick leave and annual leave.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 8<sup>th</sup> May 2004 10-00 till 12-00 usual place**