



## Your Walsall Your Voice

# Walsall LINK

Local **I**nvolvement **N**etwork for Health &  
Social care

Issue 1 January 2009

*What is a LINK?*

### Walsall Local Involvement Network

In this first issue of the  
Walsall LINK newsletter you  
can find out:

- ✓ What is a LINK?
- ✓ What's happened so far?
- ✓ How you can become involved?
- ✓ What Walsall LINK will aim to do for and with the people of Walsall

A **L**ocal **I**nvolvement **N**etwork gives you the opportunity to influence local Health and Social Care Services.

It is made up of individuals and community groups who work together to improve services, to provide a stronger voice.

A **L**INK is designed so that anyone can join or participate and aims to involve a wide and diverse representation of the community. People can get involved as much or as little as they want to.

A **L**INK is independent and is run by volunteers who belong to it. The Council has been given money by the Government to fund the LINK and has employed a 'Host' organisation to advise and support it.

Specific powers have been given to the **L**INK. It can:

- request information from commissioners and expect a response
- make recommendations to commissioners and expect a response
- refer matters to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- enter specific services and view the care provided

## What's happened so far?

The Carers Federation are the Host organisation for Walsall LINK, and have been supporting the LINK in its development.

Three events were held in January, March and June 2008 by Walsall Council for individuals and groups with an interest in the setting up of the LINK and people were nominated to form a Development group.

The Development group have been busy discussing and deciding the LINK structure, and its policies and procedures.

A Public Meeting was held on December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2008 at Beechdale Community Centre, which involved Presentations, and an Open Question Forum.

The Development group will continue as the Interim LINK Board until the first General meeting in March where Elections will be held to form the Permanent LINK Board. Walsall LINK has become a Company Limited Guarantee (Number 6739533)



## Do you want to make a difference?

**FULL** membership of Walsall LINK is open to individuals who are one of the following -

Registered to a  
Walsall GP

Resident in Walsall

Current or previous  
in/outpatient of  
Walsall Hospitals

Receiving Health or  
Social Care funded  
by Walsall Local  
Authority

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### How can you become involved ?

The more people who get involved with Walsall LINK, the stronger and more influential it can be. Anyone can become involved and participate in Walsall LINK. The LINK actively encourages a wide and diverse involvement and ways to suit you.

You do not need to become a **member** of Walsall LINK to get involved. You can contribute and express any views and opinions on Health & Social Care Services funded by Walsall Local Authority and NHS, without attending meetings.

- By completing a membership form, you can become a member of Walsall LINK.
- You can get involved by joining a specific Sub group that interests you.
- Sub groups are chaired by a LINK Board member, and discuss specific issues that concern or interest people, and make recommendations to the LINK Board for it to make decisions and take forward.
- A member of the LINK has the opportunity to nominate them-self for Elections to the LINK Board, and is able to vote.

- You can participate in the Walsall LINK by expressing your interests/concerns in writing, email or telephone to the LINK office.
- You can receive updated information about the LINK and its activities.
- You can take part in questionnaires, events, workshops, and surveys.
- Walsall LINK have a focus on communicating with the people of Walsall, and ensuring feedback and engagement is as wide and effective as possible.

Walsall LINK Interim Board has identified Health & Social Care Issues to discuss, research and investigate from January – March 2009.

- 1 Hospital Care – to include Urgent Out of Hours Care, Infection Control and Palliative Care Pathways
- 2 GP services – to include availability and accessibility, and moving of services
- 3 Health Inequalities – to include infant mortality, lifestyle issues

If you have an interest in any of the issues above and want to be involved in the Discussion Groups please get in touch with the LINK office for further information. If you want to be kept updated with the activities and outcomes, or take part in any surveys/questionnaires please let us know!

## The Supporting Walsall LINK Team

The Team have been busy building awareness of the LINK in the community, engaging with groups, individuals and strategic bodies, facilitating Training and assisting the LINK with its policies & procedures.

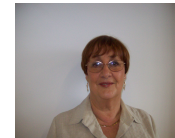
Focus in 2009 will be to increase outreach work, attend Events and hold open sessions so that everyone in Walsall will be able to contribute, participate, and get involved as and when and how they want to.



Jo-Anne



Lisa



Ann


The LINK team will be at the Independent Living Event on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March in the Town Hall between 1130am – 230pm. The Event is open to the Public and is an opportunity to meet organisations who offer help & support, so come and see us!

The team is also arranging a regular 'Coffee morning Drop In' on the first Friday of every month 9am until 12noon at Cafe Roma (West Midlands House) for everyone who wants to find out how to get involved or to express any views over a complimentary cuppa!

### **Starting 16th January 2009**

**Other coffee mornings will be arranged in venues across Walsall**

**If you would like the Team to attend any of your community events or meetings we'd love to hear from you!**

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Issue 2 -due out April 2009.

If you have any suggestions or articles concerning Health & Social care that you would like to be included in the next Issue, please contact the LINK office.

This information is available  
in different formats