

# Linklines

...using Hampshire's Joint Information Link to bring information to those caring for children with disabilities.

## Ed's Bit

Welcome to the seventeenth edition of our newsletter.

First of all, a big thank you to Jim Baker who has written the article on Cerebra for us. Jim is the Regional Office Co-ordinator and Acting Head of Parent Support at Cerebra. We met at the Special Needs Information day held in October 2008 in Alton and his response to my plea for information to share via Linklines was positive and very speedy! It's always good to meet with others making their contribution to improving life for Hampshire's parents and carers and my New Years resolutions included one to get out from the office to meet more people working with children with special needs.

With this edition I've also enclosed news of two Awareness Days being held by the Rose Road Association and the feedback from the Aiming High Participation Day held in November 2008.

My very best wishes for the New Year to everyone and my thanks for your continued support for the Joint Information Link and Linklines.

Kind regards,  
*Fiona Hall*

Joint Information Link Co-ordinator, Hampshire County Council Children's Services Dept, First Floor, Ashburton Court East, Winchester SO23 8UG Phone: 01962 846123 e-mail: 1

## National News

### **CDC to deliver national transition support programme.**

The Council for Disabled Children is to be the national transition support team, leading on the transition support programme (TSP) set out in the government's report 'Aiming High for Disabled Children'.

The national transition support team will coordinate work with local authorities, PCTs, regional advisers and existing experts. Their role will be to drive and shape the programme in local areas and improve practice around transition.

The national transition support team has developed a website to give further information about how the Transition Support Programme is progressing. It also

includes a number of resources such as a Planning and Development Tool, designed to be used by local areas to help develop their transition practice. The website features an online discussion forum for people who work with disabled young people.

If you have any issues about transition that you would like to discuss or you would like to share an example of how your area is developing their transition services, please visit Web: <http://www.transitionsupportprogramme.org.uk/> for more information

#### **Changes in payment method of DLA.**

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has begun to change the way they pay Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

If someone receives DLA and has one benefit or pension paid directly into a building society or bank account while another is paid by cheque, they will receive a letter telling them that both their payments will be converted into payments into their building society or bank account.

If a claimant isn't happy with this change in payment method they can stop it by contacting the DWP within four weeks of the date of the letter informing them about the change.

For advice and information about all aspects of claiming DLA, the main benefit for disabled children and adults, ring the Contact a Family helpline on Tel: 0808 808 3555.

#### **Overhaul of the Blue Badge scheme.**

An overhaul of the Blue Badge scheme has been announced by the Department for Transport. The Blue Badge scheme provides a range of parking concessions for people with severe mobility problems who have difficulty using public transport. The scheme operates throughout the UK.

New proposals announced include extending Blue Badge entitlement to:

- children under the age of three with specific medical conditions
- people with the most severe mental impairments/extremely disruptive behavioural problems
- specific individuals with temporary mobility problems lasting a minimum of one year

A new system of assessing eligibility for the Blue Badge is also being developed with the aim to standardise assessments throughout the country. There are also new proposals concerning extending the scheme to injured active and ex-service

personnel, and additional efforts to fight fraud and abuse of the Blue Badge scheme.

For advice on the current rules for Blue Badges ring the Contact a Family Helpline, Tel: 0808 808 3555.

Web: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/transportforyou/access/bluebadge/>

### **Disability Equality**

The Government has highlighted progress towards achieving its ambition of equality for disabled people by 2025 with the publication of a series of reports from 11 Secretaries of State, the Office for Disability Issues' (ODI) annual report and additional research about the Disability Equality Duty.

The reports by the 11 Secretaries of State are the first of their kind. They identify progress towards disability equality made by each department and where there are still issues to address. They also show how departments and public bodies will work strategically to introduce mechanisms for change. The ODI has produced an overview of the Secretary of State reports, highlighting key findings from each.

Also published is the ODI annual report showing continuing work towards improving life chances for disabled people, including:

- £35 million committed to improving childcare provision for disabled children over the next three years
- An increase over the past year in the number of accessible buses, trains and stations
- Cross-government initiatives to improve recording and prosecution of disability-related hate crime
- A 20 per cent increase in the Disabled Facilities Grant in 2009, with a further six per cent scheduled for 2010
- A 60 per cent increase in disabled students' allowances in the last year

The ODI has also published research on Disability Equality Duty implementation more generally across England, showing a growing awareness of disability equality issues and the value of involving disabled people in the development of Disability Equality Schemes.

Jonathan Shaw, Minister for Disabled People, said: "This shows real progress towards realising our vision of disability equality by 2025 and reflects the hard work of many people across government. The Secretary of State reports are the first of their kind and illustrate the Government's commitment to ensuring disabled people have the same chances in life as everyone else."

Stephen Martin, Director of the Office for Disability Issues said: "These reports underscore the importance of proactively addressing the barriers that still keep

many disabled people from reaching their full potential and realising their hopes, dreams and aspirations. We have made a lot of progress, but there is still much to be done. The ODI looks forward to continuing to work effectively with all of our partners in government and others to make the vision of equality by 2025 a reality.”

The 11 reporting departments are:

- [The Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform](#)
- [The Department for Children, Schools and Families](#)
- [The Department of Communities and Local Government](#)
- [The Department of Culture, Media and Sport](#)
- [The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs](#)
- [The Department of Health](#)
- [The Home Office](#)
- [The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills](#)
- [The Ministry of Justice](#)
- [The Department for Transport](#)
- [The Department for Work and Pensions](#)

The duty on Secretaries of State requires them to report on

- progress towards disability equality in their policy sector
- proposals for coordination of future work by relevant public authorities within their policy sector.

These reports need to be produced every three years and are unique to the Disability Equality Duty.

### **New guide and website help to deal with bullying**

Contact a Family has joined forces with Parentline Plus to produce a new guide, for parents of disabled children, about dealing with bullying,.

The guide is packed full of information and tips around spotting the signs of bullying, action you can take and strategies you can use as a parent, and your child's rights. The guide was developed from a range of stories and experiences told to the two organisations by parents of disabled children affected by bullying. Their tips and stories are included throughout the guide.

If you would like a copy of the guide or to speak to someone about bullying, please call Contact a Family's freephone helpline on Tel: 0808 808 3555 or you can download it at Web: <http://www.cafamily.org.uk/bullying.pdf>

The two charities have also launched a new website designed to help parents concerned about bullying. The site is aimed at parents of children who have been or are being bullied and parents who think their child may be involved in bullying others. It has sections for parents concerned about disablist bullying and tackles different types of bullying, including cyber bullying, physical bullying and bullying by exclusion - ignoring or leaving out.

Web: <http://www.besomeonetotell.org.uk>

### **Children and young people with Autism Debate**

On 8 October 2008 there was a Parliamentary debate, introduced by John Bercow, on autism. Mr Bercow expressed particular concern that children and young people with autism are disproportionately excluded from school – both formally and informally; that 40% of parents of children on the autistic spectrum say that their child has been bullied; and that 45% of parents say that they have to wait a year, or more, from the moment when they flag up their concern about a potentially autistic child, to the point at which they receive assistance. He called for specialist training for the children's workforce. Speaking in the debate, Schools Minister Jim Knight says that the education system should enable children with autism and other special educational needs to be provided for within mainstream education, if that is what they want. To read the debate visit <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm081008/halltext/81008h0001.htm#08100883000001>

### **Elaine Hill appointed as the new specialist advisor for autism**

Elaine Hill has been appointed as the new Specialist Advisor for Autism at the Department of Health. She will lead the development of an adult autism strategy. She will advise on the needs of people with autistic spectrum conditions in policy work on projects for social care and health services. An important part of her role will be to engage and build sustainable frameworks with key stakeholders.

For more information visit:

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=382435&NewsAreaID=2>

### **Youth Council seek volunteers**

Victoria Erbes is a consultant in the Education Support Service based at the Ivories in London. They are currently working collaboratively with the Autism Education Trust (AET) who are setting up a youth council. The aim of this is to enable young people with autism to express their views and have their voices heard over school related issues. The AET hope to have 12 individuals with wide-ranging backgrounds, geographical area, age and ability in order to provide a cross-section of experience on the council.

If you know of any children/families who might be interested in this please let Victoria know. If they agree to take part their involvement would be

- A member of the Education Support Service would travel to their school to interview them about specific areas. The questions will be tailored sympathetically to their understanding and ability and specific need, supported by symbols if necessary. The interview will last up to 30 minutes, again dependent on specific need.
- The child would need to be withdrawn from class for this time and will need to be supported by a TA or equivalent.
- There will be approximately one visit per term during the school day.

Once collated, the information will be published on the AET website. All personal details will be removed to retain confidentiality.

If you know anyone who would like to take part please contact Victoria Erbes, Consultant, Education Support Service, National Autistic Society, Unit 9, The Ivories 6/8 Northampton Street London N1 2HY  
Telephone: 0207 704 3801 Mobile: 07876 392398

#### **C4EO seek disability specialists**

The Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services (C4EO) have been working on disability as part of its three-year work programme, running from September 2008 until July 2010.

In June and July 2009, the first progress map will be published and regional knowledge workshops will be held. The theme lead is Celia Atherton, Director at Research in Practice.

As part of the theme, C4EO is reviewing the best available knowledge of 'what works' to improve outcomes in three priority areas:

- Priority 2.1. Improving the wellbeing of disabled children (up to the age of eight) and their families through increasing the quality and range of early interventions.
- Priority 2.2. Improving the wellbeing of disabled children and young people through improving access to positive activities: extended services, youth work, inclusive play and leisure opportunities, sports and the arts.
- Priority 2.3. Ensuring all disabled children and young people and their families receive services which are sufficiently differentiated to meet their diverse needs.

C4EO is seeking to recruit 18 Disability Sector Specialists (two in each of the Government Office regions). A critical role for the Centre is to offer support to

local authorities and their children's trust partners to use this new knowledge to improve outcomes for disabled children, young people and their families. This outcome improvement work will be conducted by C4EO Disability Sector Specialists acting as 'peer advisors'. Disability Sector Specialists will be staff currently working in children's services who have a recognised expertise in disability and who can demonstrate a track record of achieving effective practice locally.

The Specialists will help to spread knowledge about what works and will support outcome improvement work within their region. They will be accredited, trained, supported and deployed by the Centre, and will be seconded to the Centre for up to 50 days over an 18 month period. Sector Specialists may come from any of the agencies within the Children's Trust but must have the endorsement of their local Director of Children's Services.

#### **Charity launch song**

Include Me Too, a charity supporting disabled children and young people and their families, have launched a song to raise awareness of the rights of disabled children.

The song was created in April 2005 when disabled children and young people got together to produce the 'Include Me Too' and to raise awareness of their National Charter of Rights for Disabled Children and Young People, and now the song has been officially released.

A CD of the song is available at £2.99 and includes three versions of the song, the new 2008 version, the original 2005 version and the instrumental. A video CD includes a signed version of the song and is available at £4.99.

The song can be bought directly from Include Me TOO and all proceeds will go to ensuring the rights of disabled children are supported and promoted. Include Me TOO hopes the song will help promote the rights of disabled children and reach everyone, not just those who are aware of disability issues.

For more information on Include Me Too and how to order, go to Web: <http://www.includemetoo.org.uk/> or Telephone: 01902 711604.

#### **Footsteps Foundation funds physiotherapy**

Children with conditions such as cerebral palsy, cancer, stroke and brain damage could be taking their first steps with the help of an Oxfordshire local charity

Private therapy is difficult for most families to afford, so the Footsteps Foundation charity has been launched to help children by paying for physiotherapy at the Footsteps Centre. The Centre provides intensive physiotherapy for disabled

children with neurological conditions. Families from all over the UK can attend daily physiotherapy for three week programmes at a time. Equipment at the centre includes the Spider, which enables therapists to implement a full course of exercises in any chosen position and to align the body by using a series of elastic ropes.

The charity aims to raise £500,000 and needs the support of local individuals, clubs, groups and businesses to help even more children learn to walk.

Do you know a child who could benefit from intensive physiotherapy? Visit Web: <http://www.footstepsfoundation.com/>  
or contact e-mail: [pip@footstepsfoundation.com](mailto:pip@footstepsfoundation.com)  
or telephone: 01865 858 382 for more information.

#### **Family Fund requests your help**

The Family Fund would like your help to understand the financial needs of families with disabled children.

Family Fund are currently conducting a survey of families and would like your input. Your help will allow them to ensure that they are meeting your needs and those of other families with disabled children.

The survey should take no more than 10-15 minutes to complete and your response will be confidential. Please go to the website at: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=l7S0OGVC1wDX\\_2bS5B79EC0A\\_3d\\_3d](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=l7S0OGVC1wDX_2bS5B79EC0A_3d_3d) to complete the survey.

For more information please contact [financialneeds@familyfund.org.uk](mailto:financialneeds@familyfund.org.uk)

#### **Special Needs Guide republished**

In September 2008 Special Educational Needs: A guide for parents and carers was published in a revised version, replacing that published in 2001. The new reference number is DCSF-00639-2008BKT-EN Copies are available from DCSF publications centre on 0845 602 2260 or email [dcsf@prolog.uk.com](mailto:dcsf@prolog.uk.com). The guide, which is available in several languages, may also be downloaded at: <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/sen/parentcarers>

#### **Help write a new handbook.**

The authors of a new 'Special Needs Handbook' are calling for contributions from parents and those working with disabled children.

The handbook is intended as an information-sharing, daily problem-solving guide for all who work with, or care for, children with disabilities. The authors are looking for tried and tested tips on what works from as many different sources as

possible - parents, teachers, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, and educational psychologists.

The handbook will be available free of charge as a download on the internet and people will be able to print off and copy any of the material to use, either personally or to give freely to others, including support groups, schools, therapists.

If you would like to contribute telephone 020 7183 2277, or email:

[deborah@specialneedshandbook.com](mailto:deborah@specialneedshandbook.com)

or

[helen@specialneedshandbook.com](mailto:helen@specialneedshandbook.com)

### **Health and Well Being questionnaire.**

The British Market Research Bureaux will be sending out thousands of 'Health and Well being' questionnaires to families in January on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

Information from the questionnaire will be used to find families to take part in a further survey, in spring, about disabled children's services. Parents' answers will be used to develop a National Indicator for disabled children, which will measure the performance of each local authority's disabled children's services.

The 'Health and Well being' questionnaire is being sent out to make sure families who are currently not receiving any services are included in the survey as well as those that are. Families chosen to complete the survey will be spread across each local area and have children with a range of disabilities.

- Why is the Disabled Children's Services National Indicator important?  
This is the first time there has been a specific indicator for disabled children's services. Local areas will be able to see how they are performing and compare with others. Areas that perform badly will be expected to improve their services and are likely to channel money and resources into meeting National Indicators where they are underperforming.

- What is a National Indicator?  
In April 2008, a new system was introduced to measure and compare the performance of each local authority in England. Every local authority will now be measured against 198 National Indicators, including the Disabled Children's Services National Indicator to see how well they are serving their local community.

- What difference have other National Indicators made?

One National Indicator says that patients should be referred to a health specialist within 18 weeks of being referred by a GP - the introduction of this National Indicator has significantly reduced patient waiting times.

- If I receive a survey, why should I complete it?

The Disabled Children's Services National Indicator is a key tool to ensure services improve in your local area. It will focus education, health and social care's attention on services for disabled children in a way that hasn't been seen before. Your experiences are crucial in measuring local services for families of disabled children. The survey will be initially sent to some parents in the Spring and then to a larger sample in the summer. After that it will be sent out on a regular basis once a year.

If you, or anyone else you know about has any problems filling in the survey, there will be a phone number clearly marked on the questionnaire that you can call to get assistance.

#### **Special Educational Needs Podcast.**

A new podcast from Contact a Family has been produced to help explain the meaning of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and other related terms like SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator). The podcast also has more information about what to do if you are concerned your child has SEN, what schools and the local authority can do to help, how to request a 'statutory assessment' and the 'statementing' process. To listen to the podcast visit Web: [http://www.cafamily.org.uk/SEN\\_England.mp3](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/SEN_England.mp3) .

#### **Children's Rights report**

In December 2007, the European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency commissioned the Centre for the Study of the Child the Family and the Law, the University of Liverpool and the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute, Vienna, to develop a set of indicators to measure the implementation, protection, respect and promotion of the rights of the child in relation to areas of EU activity. This brief responds to the Commission's 2006 Communication 'Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child'. This is the first attempt by an EU institution to develop a coherent, considered approach to the development, application, monitoring and review of EU law and policy affecting children. Eurochild has received a first draft of the report for comment by 23rd January 2009. The research includes indicators on the following topics:

The Rights of the Child and the Family Environment

- The Right of the Child to an adequate standard of living
- The Right of the Child to Education
- The Right of the Child to Protection from Exploitation and Violence"

Please contact [policy@eurochild.org](mailto:policy@eurochild.org) for a full copy of this report.

## County News

### Nominate for a Sports Award

Sports Hampshire & IOW are encouraging nominations for the 2009 Hampshire & IOW Sports Awards for sporting achievements for the year of 2008.

These annual prestigious awards are co-ordinated by Sports Hampshire & IOW to publicly recognise achievement in various nominated sporting categories:

- Junior Sportsman & Junior Sportswoman
- Senior Sportsman & Senior Sportswoman
- Masters Sportsman & Masters Sportswoman
- Junior Disability Sportsman & Sportswomen
- Senior Disability Sportsman & Sportswoman
- Coach of the Year (Male or Female)
- Volunteer of the Year (Junior & Senior)
- Team of the Year (Junior & Senior)
- Official (Male or Female)
- Service to Sport (Male or Female)

The deadline for nominations is Friday 6th February 2009 and elected finalists are invited to the awards evening on Wednesday 25th March 2009 at the Hampshire Rose Bowl.

If you wish to nominate any members of your school, club, or organisation please select within the appropriate categories in accordance with the guidelines, and either nominate online or return the nomination sheet to me.

East Hants officers can also nominate members of the community for a sports award.

#### To nominate

1. Check the guidelines for nomination accessible on the following link: <http://www.sporthampshireiow.co.uk/sports-events/sports-awards-2009/sports-awards-2009-guidelines.htm>
2. Complete the appropriate nomination form - all available via links on the website. Please go to the following website page: <http://www.sporthampshireiow.co.uk/sports-awards-2009#nominationforms> and click on the hyperlink for the form you require.

Please remember that all nominations must be supported by either the Sports Development Officer, National Governing Body, School Sports Partnership or Local Sports Council.

### Grassroots Grants

Grassroots Grants is a grant scheme funded by the Government Office for the Third Sector and run locally by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation with several partner organisations, in particular Community Action Hampshire, Isle of Wight Rural Community Council, Portsmouth Council of Community Service and Southampton Voluntary Services.

The scheme is intended to give small organisations improved access to funding and more capacity to respond to local issues and needs. There is a total of over £2 Million to award through to the scheme end in March 2011 and we hope to award grants to a very wide range of groups working with all sections of our local communities.

#### Eligibility criteria

- Eligible groups will be small, volunteer-led and not-for-profit
- Groups must have an **annual income of under £20,000**, averaged over the last three years or for however many years the group has been operating if this is less than three years. This figure includes all income except for Grassroots Grants already received
- Applications must be to benefit people living in **only one** of the following areas: Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, Southampton
- Applications must be for activities, projects or equipment aimed at **meeting a local need** of some sort. The application form asks for details of the local need
- Groups can apply for a grant of **between £250 and £5,000** and there is a shorter, 'express' application form for applications up to £900. Funding can cover more than one financial year (up to March 2011) and there is space on the application form to request this
- A group can receive a **maximum of £5,000** from Grassroots over the scheme lifetime

If you think your group may be eligible to apply for a Grassroots Grant then you can call HIWCF for an application pack or download the pack from the website.

Contact details

Telephone: 01256 776101

e-mail: [info@hantscf.org.uk](mailto:info@hantscf.org.uk)

website: [www.hantscf.org.uk](http://www.hantscf.org.uk)

## Local News

### Handling Aggressive Behaviour

Havant & Petersfield Special Needs Forum invites you to a one-day course on 'Handling Aggressive Behaviour'. The course is especially for parents of children who are over the age of 8 years and who have ASD, Aspergers, Social Communications Disorder or similar conditions. It will be held on Thursday 5th February from 9.30 to 2.30 at The Acorns Centre, 76 Eagle Ave, Wecock Farm, Waterlooville PO8 9UB

Tea and Coffee will be provided with other refreshments available or, you are welcome to bring a packed lunch. Parking will be available.

The course is **free** to parents, but as places are limited, to secure a place call Cathryn 078679 23995 or e-mail [handpsnf@hcff.org.uk](mailto:handpsnf@hcff.org.uk)

### Football Club

Havant & Waterlooville Football Club are looking for children and adults who have a special need or disability and who would like to get active through Football. All ages and abilities are welcome.

If you are interested in joining this brand new group please contact Cathryn on 078679 23995 or [handpsnf@hcff.org.uk](mailto:handpsnf@hcff.org.uk)

### IFI Initiative makes fitness accessible

The Inclusive Fitness Initiative ( I.F.I. ) is a Sport England, Lottery Funded project that supports not for profit fitness facilities to become inclusive, catering for the needs of disabled and non-disabled people alike. Inclusive Fitness Facilities make developments in access, fitness equipment, staff training, marketing strategies and sports development, ensuring that fitness is accessible for all.

This scheme has been running successfully at Mill Chase Leisure Centre, Bordon for the last 3 years,

The Taro Leisure Centre, Petersfield and the Alton Leisure Centre are in the process of launching as IFI sites. The date for launch is now set for the week starting Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March.

Specialist equipment in the gym has been modified and adapted so that it is accessible to all.

- The rowing machine has a postural support seat to aid those who have limited abdominal stability.

- An upper body ergometer allows those with limited leg strength to exercise using the arms only, enabling a good cardio-vascular workout.
- Treadmills have extra long support rails at the side to aid walking and balance.
- Small steps are available to aid the transfer from floor to higher pieces of equipment.
- A Medi-motion bike allows people with neurological problems and muscular weaknesses to exercise either actively or passively. This enables a full cardio-vascular workout.

Centres offer reduced rates and one on one sessions. Sessions at Mill Chase, Alton and Taro, cost £2.80.

All programmes are supervised. All centre staff have attended training in disability awareness and gym staff attend specialist courses re-adapting programmes for disabled people.

Presently there are people attending who have MS, cerebral palsy, motor neurone disease, stroke rehab, diabetes, arthritis, fibromyalgia, spinal injuries, visual impairments, hearing impairments, learning difficulties, mental health issues, etc.

They cater for all ages and everyone is welcome. Some people attend with their support workers and in groups. Others attend by themselves and are supported through their programme by the gym staff.

As well as the gym, the centres offer lots more accessible activities such as swimming, rock climbing, boxercise, badminton, etc.

Presently approx. 12 to 15 % of all visits to the centre are by IFI users. It is an important part of their income.

For more information please phone  
Sue Lewis  
01420 472549  
Mill Chase Leisure Centre.

### **Support for parents**

A new support group for parents run by parents is going to be held at Hollywater School, Mill Chase Road, Bordon GU35 0HA

The support group will be open to any parent with a child of any age, who has a disability. You can come along for a coffee and a chat, whether you want to relax, get some support or just to make friends. A small donation of 50p towards

refreshments would be appreciated. The group will meet on the second Tuesday of each month (starting 13<sup>th</sup> January 2009) at the Hollywater School between 0930 and 1100 am.

For further information please contact Hollywater School 01420 474396  
Or contact by e-mail: [krwright@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:krwright@hotmail.co.uk)  
Or [Stephanie.souidan@hollywater.hants.sch.uk](mailto:Stephanie.souidan@hollywater.hants.sch.uk)

### **Lottery library boost**

Hampshire has been awarded more than £1.2 million by the Big Lottery Fund to improve five of its libraries. The funding is part of a £5 million cash injection from the Lottery's Community Libraries Programme to ten libraries across the south east region.

The money will be used to give library buildings a makeover in Havant, Waterlooville, Leigh Park, Hayling Island and Aldershot. As well as all the books you could ever wish for, these new community libraries will offer a range of activities including ICT courses, crafts, family history, languages, sign language and even writing workshops.

## **Achievements**

### **Wheelie record breaker**

Sixteen-year-old Aaron Fotheringham - or 'Wheels' as he is known to his friends - performs acrobatic stunts in his wheelchair. He is the first person to perform a back flip in a wheelchair and has had this feat accepted by the World Records Academy. Aaron, who was born with spina bifida and has been a wheelchair user since age three, said 'Being in a wheelchair is like carrying your skateboard with you.'

### **Sailor plans second round-Britain yacht trip**

A yachtswoman will make a second attempt at becoming the first female quadriplegic to sail solo around Britain next year after being forced to abandon her first trip. Hilary Lister, 36, plans to embark on the journey next May by sailing around the British coast using a "sip-and-puff" system of straws to control the sails and tiller of her yacht.

Hilary, from Faversham, Kent, had to abandon her initial trip in the summer after she was beset by a series of problems including bad weather and technical issues with her yacht. She spent six months preparing for the record-breaking challenge, which was expected to take three to four months in her specially-

adapted vessel, an Artemis 20 called Me Too. Hilary - who has no movement below her neck - hopes to have better luck at her second attempt. She first came to prominence in 2005 when she became the first quadriplegic sailor to sail solo across the English Channel. She followed that feat up two years later when she became the first disabled woman to sail around the Isle of Wight. Now she is setting her sights yet again on the round-Britain trip. Hilary said: "I'm confident that with the experience gained this year, we will achieve my round-Britain dream in 2009. Despite terrible weather, this year we sailed the entire length of the South Coast, which is further than any female disabled sailor has achieved before."

An active child, Hilary found herself wheelchair-bound at the age of 15 because of a progressive neurological disorder which eventually led to the loss of use of her body from the neck down. She finally lost the use of her arms and hands in 1998, aged 27, but in late September 2003 she was taken sailing on a lake by a friend and fell in love with the sport. She said: "Sailing came along when life didn't seem worth living any more. Within seconds of being on the water, a light switched back on inside me. I knew that I had found what I was going to do with the rest of my life."

#### **Youngest MBE**

Fourteen-year-old Eleanor Simmonds, who won two Paralympian gold medals for swimming in Beijing last year, has been awarded an MBE - the youngest person ever to receive an award in the New Year Honours list.

#### **CDC Director awarded OBE**

Director of the Council for Disabled Children (CDC), Christine Lenehan, has been appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for her work with disabled children and their families for over thirty years. As director of CDC and board member of the Every Disabled Child Matters (EDCM) campaign, Christine has been at the vanguard of her field - raising the policy profile of disabled children and young people.

Christine said: 'This is an honour and a tribute not only to me but also to my colleagues that have ceaselessly fought to get and keep disabled children and young people on the agenda.'

Christine has worked as a social worker in residential and fieldwork settings and for voluntary and statutory agencies. Christine was a member of the expert working group on the Children's National Service Framework module on disabled children and was responsible for the development of its consultation programme. She was also on the advisory group for the publication Improving the life chances of disabled people, issued by the Prime Ministers Strategy Unit in January 2005.

Christine currently holds several strategic roles including being a member of the Stakeholders Group looking at implementing Every Child Matters, the Ministerial Implementation Group for Implementing Aiming High for Disabled Children and the Programme Board overseeing Aiming High for Disabled Children.

The Council for Disabled Children hosts the Transition Information Network and the national transition support team for the AHDC Transition Support Programme.

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To send in any news or helpful information that you would like to share via Linklines contact: Fiona Hall, Joint Information Link Co-ordinator, Children's Services, Children & Families Strategic Planning Team, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Ashburton Court East, Winchester SO23 8UG Phone: 01962 846123  
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**Thank You!                      Next issue of Linklines – March 2009**