

How Hyndburn Works

Hyndburn Disabled Forum

Quick Guide 4c

BACKGROUND

The Hyndburn Disabled Forum was initiated by Hyndburn Community Network in 2007, so that those residents with a disability have an opportunity to contribute to decisions about which local problems need the most attention and money and also decisions made about local issues and service delivery.

'to raise awareness of and discuss the issues that people with disabilities face; our health, our care, our say, securing meaningful employment through supports services, and transport being top priorities'

AIM

The Hyndburn Disabled Forum is where people are empowered to live their lives in the way they chose and where their skills and expertise are valued. The Disabled Forum is a group of people with a desire to improve services for the people in Hyndburn by working in partnership. These volunteers are willing to work together and use their influence to stand up for the interests of disabled people across Hyndburn.

The aim of the Hyndburn Disabled Forum is to work with the public, private and community, voluntary and faith sectors, helping to resolve issues regarding policy development and access to services, and support continuous improvement for disability equality within Hyndburn.

It also aims to promote good relations, the values which underline equal treatment for people with disabilities and which contribute to the fight against discrimination and seeks to eradicate the stereotypical views some people have of disabled people.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Forum is to enable disabled persons to meet and discuss their priorities and needs, feed them to, and work with the local authority, statutory bodies and voluntary sector agencies in order to address them.

To develop a community of people with physical, mental and/or sensory impairments or long-term illness in the Hyndburn area in order to:

- collect information about people's needs;
- provide a forum for people to discuss their needs and concerns;
- comment upon and scrutinise the policies and initiatives of the statutory/public bodies and service providers as well as those of other relevant organisations;
- develop and initiate its own policies and transmit these to the public and private sector and other relevant organisations;
- to have links to the Carers Networks at local, county, regional and national level.

Objectives

- a) To promote the development of affordable services and facilities that are accessible to all members of the community.

- b) To be consulted by and to make recommendations to the relevant parties on the accessibility and impact on older and disabled people on important issues such as planning, regeneration, policies, services, equality and inclusion, community cohesion,
- c) To overcome poverty, prejudice and social exclusion by facilitating quality disability information and advice throughout Hyndburn.
- d) To develop, monitor and implement strategies to improve the health and well-being of people with physical, sensory disabilities and /or mental disabilities and long-term illness in the Hyndburn area.
- e) To explore the issues and concerns of people with physical, mental and/or sensory impairments or long-term illnesses.
- f) To work to reduce inequality and address social exclusion.
- g) To work to ensure that the needs of Black and other minority and ethnic disabled communities are known to the relevant authorities.
- h) To scrutinise the policies and service delivery practices of the public and private sector, and to campaign for improvement, where necessary, by raising issues at the Local Strategic Assembly Board, sub group meetings and other relevant committees and organisations.
- i) To empower people to articulate their own needs and those of the community they represent, for example by providing training, advocacy, etc.
- j) To work with other reference groups/community interest as appropriate.
- k) To devise innovative ways of involving and consulting disabled people who are unable to participate in the activities of the Hyndburn Disabled Forum.

Governance

The Disabled Forum will develop a Terms of Reference as its governing document.

Progress Report

Meetings

During the current financial year the Forum will hold six business meetings.

Agenda items have or will include: Our health, our care, our say and working in partnership, employment, independent living, transport, education and training, access to leisure facilities and emergency respite care.

Key activities: Discussion workshop on current topics and social issues and setting priorities to these issues. (see Future Agenda items)

Events: None organised so far.

Representation

The forum has not elected officers at this stage.

The forum has elected Peter Goodall as the Disabled Forum representative on Hyndburn Local Strategic Partnership Assembly Board (LSP).

Arthur Bateman represents the Disabled Forum on the Network's Board.

The forum does not have representation on the working groups of the LSP.

Attendees

Following the November 2007 meeting the Forum wrote to HBC and the Cabinet has now appointed Cllr Malcolm Pritchard as the Disabled Persons Champion for Hyndburn. Access Lancashire has attended a meeting.

The Disabled Forum will invite representatives of the statutory bodies and voluntary sector organisations to attend meetings as required by the agenda.

Representatives from Hyndburn Over 50s Forum and Hyndburn Better Government for Older People attend meetings.

Publicity

There have been four press releases issued this financial year.

Posters have been circulated throughout the voluntary, community and faith sector to promote the forum

The Forum has also agreed that it would like to produce a regular newsletter if funding can be secured.

The Forum would like to hold events to promote the forum and bring the wider disabled community together.

The Forum would like its own promotional leaflet if funding can be secured.

Consultations

The Disabled Forum has taken part in the following consultations:

HBC – Community Cohesion Strategy

HBC – Equality Strategy

HBC – Parks and Open Spaces REAP survey

HBC – Sustainable Community Strategy

LCC – Fair Access to Care Services

LP – Ambition Lancashire

In Progress

The Forum is at a relatively early stage in its development and is striving to:

- act as an information exchange between people and service providers
- facilitate communication between agencies and individuals relating to disability equality issues
- promote the need for fairness, justice and equal access to services for all people
- act as a “critical friend” to service providers and support the completion of Equality Impact Assessments (EIA’s)
- raise awareness of all forms of discrimination
- identify and communicate examples of good practice and support continuous improvement
- provide information, advice and guidance to which all the service providers can refer.
- promote the Disabled Forum as an example of equalities practice and partnership between user groups and service providers.
- be representative and be enabled to develop skills to offer feedback and advice to service providers
- consider and work towards finding solutions to issues identified by the Disabled Forum.

Future Topics for Agenda or workshops (not standard items)

- ***Health - Our health, our care, our say*** - Influencing the decision-making process and delivery of services.

- **Employment** - Securing meaningful employment through support services; Disability, Skills and Work Report 2007
- **Transport** - monitoring access to public and private transport facilities, for example parking, public service vehicles, bus stops and so on
- **Education** - My school, my family, my life - Telling it like it is; Education and the DDA - proposals for change
- **Health & Independent Living** - Supported independent living in housing instead of institutional care; Support networks for vulnerable people and carers; Emergency respite care; Expert Carers Programme (ECP); VAT & disabled people – VAT reliefs
- **Community** - The contribution that disabled and vulnerable people make to their communities.
- **Working in partnership** with health agencies, the voluntary, community and faith sector and the Hyndburn Local Strategic Partnership.
- **Access to Buildings** - Mapping exercise
- **Hyndburn Sustainable Community Strategy** – to address the issues that matter to local residents and to make Hyndburn ‘a better place to live, work and visit’.
- **Ambition Lancashire** – a caring and healthy Lancashire – developing collaborative arrangements for service planning with disabled people, carers and other stakeholders; developing arrangements for closer service integration in services for people with mental health problems
- **Access and Information** - to monitor access to services, facilities and information. Work with partners who are trained and experienced consultants in conducting access audits and surveys.
- **Quality** - monitor health and local authorities’ policies and practices in the provision of services for disabled people, particularly health and social care.
- **LCC** – Help Direct Gateways

Future Meeting Dates

The Forum meets at **Hyndburn Voluntary & Community Resource Centre**,
St James Old School, Cannon Street, Accrington BB5 2ER.

1030 to 1230 — Wednesday

16 April, 18 June, 20 August and 15 October 2008

Hyndburn’s Disabled Forum is facilitated by Hyndburn Community Network. You are welcome to attend the meeting -

Telephone 01254 232426 or email info@hyndburncommunitynetwork.org.uk

Special Requirements

If you have any special requirements with regard to your disability that will enable you to fully contribute and enjoy the meeting please let us know in advance so that we can make necessary adjustments.

Transport

If you require transport to the meeting please telephone Dial-a-Ride on 237323 and arrange a pickup in time for the meeting and for your return journey. Please book early to avoid disappointment. Alternatively contact the Network and we may be able to arrange a taxi (subject to funding being secured for 2008-2009).

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Hyndburn Disabled Forum works with Lancashire VCFS Consortium Disabled Specialist Hub, LCC East Lancs Physical Disability Partnership Board and Access Lancashire