



Web forum

The web forum is now up and running. Thank you to those of you who are using the site to join in the discussion topics. We would really welcome your feedback so we can continue to improve and develop all our services. If you'd like to use the forum just log into kirklees.gov.uk/forums and follow the instructions on how to register.

A helping hand for Carers – My story

For anybody who has had a change in their circumstances who is considering re-entering the employment market after being a carer for a long time but lacks the self confidence, and is not sure who to turn to for help or advice or simply find the idea daunting (sounds familiar?) then read on. There is help out there, and it's easier than you think.

This is my story

My personal thoughts and feelings were described as above, then one day by chance I was looking through a copy of the Carers magazine and I came across the page advertising the Carers Gateway and in it, it described the very things I needed to get me back on track mentally, and assistance in various ways to getting back to work.

I thought that this was worth a try so after phoning for an appointment and an informal chat I sat back pleased that I'd taken this first step, not knowing just how easy and helpful this would turn out to be.

Carers Gateway works in the form of a friendly get together in a relaxed atmosphere, usually of a 1 to 2 hour period once a week over coffee with fellow carers and advisors who help and advise you with your specific requirements.

This is established through an initial assessment on a one to one basis with an advisor to help you to identify your needs and goals. Don't worry its simple straightforward and not daunting at all. Once this is done (it only takes about half an hour) you continue to attend the weekly sessions as described above working towards your goals.

For me, this included some well needed confidence building, advice on interview techniques and CV preparation to bring me into the 21st Century. This was all achieved with the expert help and guidance of Maria and Jasmin, just two of the advisors on hand.

continued..

Then I also established that my



For information on anything in this newsletter or other issues on your mind please call the Independent Living Team on 01484 416760.

qualification for my fork lift truck license was somewhere back in the Stone Ages and seriously out of date and needed refreshing and updating to meet current health and safety requirements. I also needed an updated refresher on the truck myself.

Maria and Jasmin again came to my aid, having no spare money of my own they in collaboration with Stephen Hey the Carers support Co-ordinator, and secured me the funding to attend a training course to get my much needed re-training and updated qualification.

The rest they say is history. But thanks to people like Maria, Jasmin, and Stephen, I got the funding, training and help I needed as well as the dignity and self confidence I was so dearly lacking to step into the world and take my place in society, If I can do this then so can you. There really is expert help and support you need when you need it. All you have to do is take that first step, and pick up the phone as I did. You won't be disappointed.

Good Luck
Dale Wade

Keep safe & warm this winter

Kirklees Council and Anchor staying put have teamed up to provide FREE gas servicing.

Yes **FREE** gas servicing with Anchor funded by Kirklees Council.

To qualify for this service you need:

- To be living in the Kirklees area
- Own your own home
- Be on a means tested benefit
- Not received a gas service through Anchor in the last 12 months
- Be over 60 OR have a disability or long term illness.

If you meet the above requirements just contact Anchor on 01484 845492 or stayingput.kirklees@anchor.org.uk for an application form.

At Anchor they can also help with hand rails, grab rails, making paths safe, door safety chains plus more. Please contact for more information.



The Cinema Exhibitors' Association Card

The Cinema Exhibitors' Association Card is a national card that can be used to verify that the holder is entitled to one free ticket for a person accompanying them to the cinema.

To apply for the card, you will need to meet one or more of the following criteria:

- a) Be in receipt of the disability living allowance or attendance allowance.
- b) Be a registered blind person.

The card is valid for 3 years from the date of issue.

A processing fee of £5.50 is chargeable per card. This is to be sent along with the completed application.

Application forms are available from cinemas across the UK supporting this card or see their website www.ceacard.co.uk to download application form and list of participating cinemas.

Changing Places

The Changing Places Consortium is campaigning for Changing Places toilets to be installed in all big public places such as shopping centres, hospitals, motorway service stations and airports.

A Changing Places toilet provides a changing bench, hoist and plenty of space in a safe and clean environment. By providing for this basic need it will allow for some of the most isolated people in our society to leave their homes in confidence that appropriate facilities are there should they need them. There are almost no Changing Places toilets in the UK.

For more information visit their website at www.changing-places.org



Free travel for over 60s

There's free off-peak local bus travel throughout England, for everyone aged 60 and over, disabled and blind people from April 2008.

There is still time to order your new English National Concessionary Passes and receive them before April 2008. If people apply now at their local Post Office or at a Bus Station Travel Centre you will receive them in time for 1 April 2008 when they replace the current Metro Senior Permit. New passes are being introduced across the country as part of a Government scheme which will also give card holders free, off-peak, local bus travel throughout England.

Your Concessionary Pass also entitles you to train travel within West Yorkshire for just 35p after 9.30am Monday-Friday and all day at weekends and public holidays.

More details at www.wymetro.com or phone MetroLine on 0113 245 7676 or pick up a leaflet at the bus station.



Independent Living Fund Changes

Over the next three years from April 2008, ILF will be given a fixed amount of money and because of a higher number of applications being made it means that some of ILF's rules need to change.

Trustees want to make sure that ILF can continue to support you, whilst also continuing to enable new users who will benefit most from applying to ILF. The most important thing to tell you is that if you already get money from the ILF, you **will continue to get your current award**, as long as the rules in ILF's user guide leaflets continue to be met.

The 2 main changes detailed below will apply to ILF Users living in England, Scotland and Wales from 1 April 2008.

Where the ILF receives a new application or a request for an increase from a Group 2 user (former 1993 Fund Users or users who applied on or after 1 October 2007) both changes below will apply. If you are a Group 1 user (former Extension Fund users) requesting an increase only the second change will apply:

1 Change to the amount needed from your Local Authority (LA) towards your support (Group 2 Users only)

For all new applications received by ILF the minimum contribution required from the LA will be £16,640 per year or £320 per week. This means that the ILF will not be able to start making payments to any new applicant who has less than this amount provided by their LA.

For existing ILF Users, if the **cost of the care** that you already receive goes up, the LA will not have to increase its contribution in order for ILF to consider paying you more money. If the **amount of care** you need changes, we will still consider paying you more money up to our maximum of £455 per week but **will only be able to do this when the amount you get from your LA is at least £320 per week**.

When your LA is meeting the £320 per week contribution, ILF will be able consider any increase in funding up to £455 without having to ask your LA to increase their contribution further. This means we no longer have to operate a complicated policy which we called our £ for £ policy.

You may want to contact your LA directly for more information about their current contribution towards your support.

2 Change to the date that ILF can pay increased awards from (Group 1 and Group 2 Users)

The ILF will only be able to pay you a new or revised award from the date that the Agreement Form is **received** at the ILF offices, unless we receive evidence of the care costs from an earlier date. We expect to have to apply the 2 main changes outlined above for the whole of the 2008/09 Year but we will continue to monitor the situation throughout the year.

Other information

Useful website links for equipment

<http://www.abilitynet.co.uk>
<http://www.williammerrittleeds.org>
<http://www.assist-uk.org>
<http://www.whizz-kidz.org.uk>
<http://www.after16.org.uk>
<http://www.motability.co.uk>
<http://www.showerright.co.uk>
<http://www.lmb-ltd.co.uk>
<http://yorkshiremobility.com>
<http://www.careandrepair-england.org.uk/>
<http://www.lazarusmobility.com/>

Useful numbers

Independent Living Team
01484 416760

Pay and Employment Rights Service (PERS) is in Dewsbury and will give help and advice to employers about legal rights and obligations. Please contact them on 01924 439381.

Kirklees Council Carers Gateway
01484 226050

Social Services Information Point
Huddersfield 01484 223000
Dewsbury 01924 325070
Cleckheaton 01274 335072
Batley 01924 326336

Enquiries regarding financial assessment - Client Financial Affairs 01484 222059

News update

Health & Social Care Bill

The Health & Social Care Bill had its first reading in the House of Commons on 15th November 2007. Amongst other issues the Bill introduces measures to allow direct payments to be opened up to previously excluded groups. This should allow us to make a direct payment to a third party on behalf of someone who lacks capacity, such as a disabled child who wishes to continue the direct payment previously made in their parents name and adults with a learning disability or dementia. We'll keep you up to date with any further developments

Putting people first

On 10th December 2007 the government published its vision for the transformation of Adult Social Care. The key elements of a personalised Adult Social Care system will ensure that people are supported to live independently, participate as active and equal citizens and retain maximum control over their lives. The alleviation of loneliness and isolation are to become priorities and there will be greater emphasis on self assessment. Person centred planning and self directed support will become mainstream and will define

individually tailored support packages. Drawing on the feedback from some of the Individual Budget pilot sites it is recognised that system wide transformation is necessary and driven by a shared commitment to social justice. To read the full document log onto the Department of health website at www.dh.gov.uk and go to the "Publications and Statistics" page. This is an exciting time to be involved in social care and we are pleased to be at the heart of the self directed support initiative.

Your next payment

The payment into your bank account on 25th February will be for 5 weeks instead of 4. This is because in this Financial Year there will be 53 weeks instead of 52.

The following payment which will be paid on 31st March will be for the usual 4 weeks.

We can support you look for help to meet your needs