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News from Lewisham Speaking Up

ISSUE 1

WINTER 2005

It's official!

Lewisham Speaking Up Launched



We got off to a flying start last autumn when Lewisham's Mayor, Steve Bullock, helped us celebrate our first two years. He also helped us launch Lewisham Speaking Up, our new logo and our new BIG Speaking Up Group.

More inside - see story 1 on page 2.....



Six of the best!

We speak up for independence and power for ourselves and other people with learning disabilities. Getting people involved and heard is what advocacy is all about.

Because of our work, Lewisham Council backed us for a National 'community involvement' award — and we are one of only six groups chosen in the final round. Great!

1. Our plan for Independence



Donald Kennedy speaks up at a group meeting

Becoming a fully independent advocacy organisation is vital for Lewisham Speaking Up and it's good news for people with learning disabilities.

For a long time there has been little or no independent advocacy around.

We have a long way to go but we have made our mark and there is no turning back. What do we want to do?

See page 4 for more.

You can call me on:



020 8692 1862

2. A One to One **hello** from Isabella

Hello, my name is Isabella Hawkins. I am the new One to One Advocate at Lewisham Speaking Up.

If you feel like you need support to speak up and be heard, I might be able to help.

If needed, you can visit me on Wednesdays, between 2pm-4pm, but please try to call first.



3. We Speak Up — and Boots listen



“Some shops were better than others”



Lucy Reeve

As part of a pilot survey for Boots the Chemist, Lucy Reeve became a 'Mystery Shopper'.

Boots wants to get better, make their shops more accessible and train their staff to be more helpful for people with learning disabilities.

Lucy's view? Could do better!

4. BIG Speaking Up Group tells Police how it is

We wanted to talk about bullying, crime and keeping safe. Police Sergeant Tony Unthank came to find out what we think and see what can be done to help. Travelling at night, being well supported, crowded buses, and rude young people were all a worry and Tony has added them to Lewisham's three year crime reduction plan. Thanks for listening Tony.

"The evening gave us some challenging areas to address, such as behaviour on buses and bullying in the street."

Tony Unthank
Lewisham's
Community
Safety Team



5. Lewisham Hospital — our views on the new wing



**Lewisham hospital's new wing,
to be ready early in 2006**

The people helping to make Lewisham Hospital's new wing came to us asking for our views and ideas.

At a special focus group we talked about making the hospital and buildings better for patients and visitors with learning disabilities.

We wanted better information about how to get around and about the medicines we need. We asked for more hospital food choices and photo menus to help us choose.



We also said we want clean wards, separate areas for men and women, more privacy, less noise when we try to sleep at night and staff to be better at talking to people with learning disabilities and understanding what we want. Thanks to Lynn and Ian from Lewisham Hospital for asking us what we think.

6. Choosing who speaks up - for you!

"Vote for me, I will listen to what people say"



For over two years Entelechy Arts and now Lewisham Speaking Up have been supporting representatives at Lewisham's Learning Disability Partnership Board.

This is a big meeting where the things talked about make a real difference to people with learning disabilities in Lewisham. Now the Partnership Board are looking for a Co-Chairperson to help run the meetings and speak up for all people with learning disabilities.

Who do you want to do this important job? There are two experienced people who want you to vote for them. Here is why. To cast your vote use the reply slip below.

"Vote for me, I will work hard at speaking up for you"



Stefan Nowak

Patricia Clark

What do we want to do? - continued from page 2. Our mission statement says.....

'We will help self-advocates to speak up and be heard' - a £20,000 grant from Values Into Action in 2004 for self-advocacy has helped more people get involved than ever before. Now we are seeking additional funding to continue growing the project as there remains a long way to go.

'We will give one to one advocacy support when needed' - our One to One Advocacy project is a great start, but again we believe nowhere near enough to allow us to meet peoples advocacy needs.

'We will find volunteer advocacy partners for people who want them' - finding long term volunteer 'Citizen Advocacy Partners' remains a challenging objective. Unfortunately we have been unsuccessful in securing funding for this activity, which remains on hold, for now.

'We will help people learn, listen and focus on what's important to us' - self-advocacy activity, group work and training supports peoples learning and understanding of the world around them.

'We will help others learn about us' - the projects work will help raise disability awareness amongst others whilst highlighting issues that concern people with learning disabilities.



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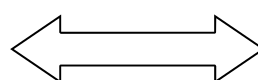
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LEWISHAM SPEAKING UP REPLY SLIP — TO VOTE PLEASE TICK BOX

PLEASE

1. CHOOSE
2. CUT OUT
3. POST

BY MARCH 31ST



'We speak up for independence and power for ourselves and other people with learning disabilities'