



PSI Information and Strategy Session

27 February 2019, 10:00-11:30

St George's Centre, 60 Great George Street, Leeds LS1 3DL

Forum Central Updates

Forum Central Re-Commissioning

We're very pleased that our existing Forum Central partnership (PSI-Volition – lead partner, Leeds Older People's Forum and Tenfold) has been successful in securing the health and care third sector forum contract for a further 3 years, starting from 1 April 2019. We're currently in our mobilisation phase, working on how we can develop the Forum Central service further so it's the best it can be for members.

Next Steps: We're holding an event, 'Looking Back, Looking Forward' on **Tuesday 16 April, 10-12 noon** to celebrate Forum Central's achievements over the

last 3 years, and look to the future for the health and care third sector in Leeds. We'd love to see you there – come along to take part and eat cake!

Taking forward work from Feel Connected event

Back in December we held our Feel Connected: Finding Ways out of Social Isolation and Loneliness event to mark International Day of Disabled People. A report from the event is available here (or contact us for hard copies): <https://www.forumcentral.org.uk/forum-central-feel-connected-event-4-dec-follow-up/>

The event was a great success, with over 50 people attending (third sector organisations, disabled people and partner organisations), lots of interesting discussions about how loneliness affects disabled people with physical and sensory impairments and ideas about how we can work together to make positive change happen.

One of the key themes talked about was accessibility of public spaces and services – and how negative experiences can have a huge impact on many disabled people being able to get out into the community and live their lives as they choose. A key action was to bring together member organisations and partners to share best practice, and talk about accessibility issues in more detail, so all of our guest speakers today will be touching on this.

Member News and Updates

Saturday 16 March is Disabled Access Day. Leeds City Council, working with partners at the University of Leeds, Guide Dogs for the Blind and William Merritt Disabled Living Centre, will be running three events to showcase accessible facilities and spread awareness in the wider community. Disabled people are being encouraged to come along to these events, celebrate accessibility, and try something new and write a review on Euan's Guide.

More info about the events can be found here:

<https://www.forumcentral.org.uk/16-march-leeds-celebrating-disabled-access-day/>

And more info about Disabled Access Day here:

<https://www.disabledaccessday.com/>

Healthwatch Leeds – PSI Projects

Tatum Yip, Community Project Worker

Healthwatch Leeds was established in April 2013, to bring the voices and experiences of local people to influence decisions made about their health and care. Healthwatch uses people's voices and experiences to influence decision makers and service providers in Leeds.

Through the Health and Social Care Act 2012, local Healthwatch representatives have the power to go into any publicly funded health and care service, to talk to

service users, their families and carers, gather evidence based feedback and report to providers, commissioners, CQC etc. This is called 'enter and view'. They work with health and social care partners to identify how people can have the most influence – including representing the voice of people in Leeds at key strategic boards such as the Health and Wellbeing Board. They also provide information, advice and signposting for the public about finding and accessing health and care services, and also act as a 'last port of call' for health and care complaints.

Tatum and Healthwatch Leeds volunteers are working on a project to find out about how people with visual impairments access health and social care services, so that they can highlight good practice and also any barriers that visually impaired people face. They will publicise the findings so that decision makers can recognise the issues and make improvements to services.

Next Steps: They are asking visually impaired people in Leeds to fill out a short survey about their experiences:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/HSC96YW>

The survey closes on 29 March. They will be running a separate project to find out about Deaf people's experiences of health and care services later on in 2019.

To find out more about Healthwatch Leeds:

Website: <https://healthwatchleeds.co.uk/>

Telephone: 0113 898 0035

Textphone: 07551 122289

Email: info@healthwatchleeds.co.uk

A Street Charter for Leeds

Maqsood Sheik, RNIB

The ability of disabled people with physical and sensory impairments to go out and actively participate in their communities is linked directly to the environment of streets and other public spaces.

Maqsood has been working in partnership with other visual impairment organisations including Guide Dogs Leeds and the National Federation for the Blind through a working group called Pavements are for People, to engage with Leeds City Council officers in a bid to highlight key issues which affect visually impaired people when it comes to public spaces and develop a way forward for tackling these.

They have proposed that Leeds develops a Street Charter, a single, simple and easy to follow document bringing together policies and guidance, which would be aimed at removing and reducing obstacles to blind and partially sighted people being able to safely navigate their local streets. These are aimed at local decision makers and often include guidance on managing obstacles such as advertising boards, pavement care parking, overhanging bushes etc. Several cities, including Hull, Bradford and Barnsley already have Street Charters in place.

The Council have made a commitment in principle to explore potential for a Street Charter for Leeds, with

the next stage being investigative work with partners to review current practice and procedures, understand gaps and develop a way forward. Maqsood is keen to involve the wider disability third sector, and disabled people, in this work, as accessibility of public spaces affects many people, not just those with visual impairments.

Next Steps:

To find out more about the Street Charter, contact Maqsood: Maqsood.Sheikh@rnib.org.uk

We'll keep members updated with this work and any opportunities to influence through Forum Central.

Leeds Access Advisor and Leeds Directory Dean Butcher, Care and Repair

(See slides for further information)

Dean gave an update about Leeds Access Advisor, a pilot project run by four students studying on the MA Disabilities Studies course at University of Leeds and hosted by Care and Repair in summer 2018, with the aim of encouraging more disabled people to review venues in the city and add disabled access reviews to Euan's Guide, a national accessibility guide, to help map accessibility around Leeds. The project was very successful, with 70+ reviews added during summer 2018.

Although the project has now finished, the team are still encouraging people to add more reviews to Euan's

guide and raise awareness of it as useful resource for disabled people and their friends and families.

Dean also gave a preview of the re-worked Leeds Directory website, which will be moving from Care and Repair back in-house to Leeds City Council, going live from 1 April. They want to make Leeds Directory accessible and user-friendly for everyone. They have done extensive user testing to get the beta version of the website to where it is now, and once it is live they will be encouraging all users to give feedback, so they can make any changes required.

Next Steps:

The new look Leeds Directory website will go live from 1 April 2019. There will be an accessibility section with a link to Euan's Guide on Leeds Directory.

The team involved in Leeds Access Advisor are encouraging disabled people in Leeds to keep adding reviews to Euan's Guide too:

<https://www.euansguide.com/>

Accessible Leeds

**Nathan Popple and Fern Wickham-Warwick,
William Merritt Disabled Living Centre**

(See slides for further information)

Nathan has cerebral palsy and is a wheelchair user. Several years ago, he had a bad experience when he

tried to go bowling with friends and couldn't as there were lots of stairs and no accessibility for wheelchair users. This made Nathan feel sad and angry so he decided to initiate a campaign - Accessible Leeds.

Accessible Leeds is an online portal for people to review the accessibility of venues across Leeds. The website provides up to date information with the aim of helping people to understand the wheelchair and mobility accessibility available throughout the city.

Until recently, Nathan was doing all of the work for Accessible Leeds himself, which was a huge challenge. Now he has decided to pass Accessible Leeds over to the William Merritt Centre, and is working closely with Fern to get more reviews up.

Next Steps: The Accessible Leeds team need your help! They want to encourage disabled people to leave reviews on the site next time they visit a leisure venue. You can find out more here: <https://www.wmdlc.org/accessible-leeds/>

Discussion

Following the presentations, we had a short discussion about accessibility in Leeds. Leeds Access Advisor and Accessible Leeds have done some great work separately; all agreed that there is lots of potential to also work together so that there is a better range of information available for disabled people who want to find out about accessing services, leisure venues etc. in the city. We also talked about the possibility of working together to do more campaigning (e.g. by using

Accessible Leeds and Euan's Guide/Leeds Directory to highlight to business owners and statutory providers about accessibility problems, and encouraging them to make changes). Our speakers agreed to discuss next steps together.

If you want to get involved in this work going forward, contact Lucy via lucy.graham@forumcentral.org.uk or 0113 242 1321

Upcoming Dates for Your Diary

Forum Central Looking Back, Looking Forward celebration event

Tuesday 16 April, 10-12 noon, St George's Centre, City Centre

Health and Care Leader's Network

Tuesday 30 April, 1-4pm, St George's Centre, City Centre

Next PSI Info and Strategy Session

Wednesday 29 May, 2-4pm, the Old Fire Station, Gipton

More info and bookings via hello@forumcentral.org.uk
or call us on 0113 242 1321

We hope to see you soon!