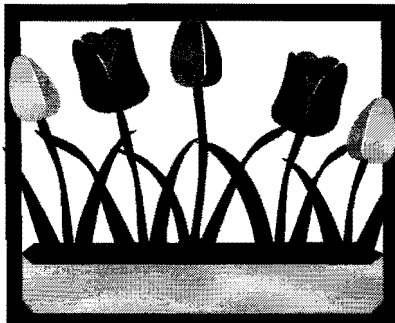


Hastings & Rother Disability Forum

Re-Action

**Hastings & Rother
Disability Forum**

Spring 2007 Issue

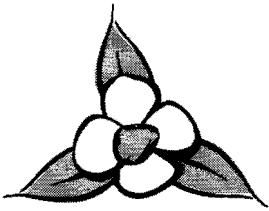


Editorial

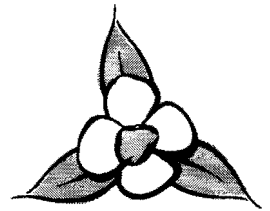
Welcome to the first issue of Re-Action for 2007. We ended 2006 with a very successful Arts Festival to celebrate International Day of Disabled People and we are now ready to launch ourselves into a busy 2007. We will continue to work with other community groups and organisations and tackle local issues that affect Disabled People. Already this year we have taken part in the development of the Community Cohesion Action Plan, looked at access issues at the De la Warr Pavilion and met with various groups and organisations about the cycling trail in the town centre.

Also we will soon start to organise another themed open meeting, the details will be dropped through your letter box in due course.

We are always looking for items to print in the newsletter so if you have any issues or ideas you would like us to know about please get in contact **01424 201201** or email **enquiries@hrdf.org.uk**



Ian Butler **A True campaigner**



At our committee meeting last night we were informed of the sad loss of one of our longest standing committee members, Ian Butler, who had been ill for some time.

I have very fond memories (as do we all) of Ian's time with us. He was always the 'joker of the pack' with his corny wise-cracks that made the most pedestrian committee meetings go with a bang. I particularly recall his encyclopaedic knowledge of buses, which amazed us all at Access Group meetings. I regularly used to join Ian and his wife Wendy at the annual Bus Rally at the Oval in Hastings where he would indulge me in a feast of facts and figures regarding the make, model and design of all the vehicles on display during the day.

He will be sorely missed and I have no doubt that HRDF will move on to bigger and better things which will in no small part be a testimony and a tribute to the passion that Ian had for campaigning for the rights of disabled people.

By Kev Towner Co Vice Chair

Arts Festival— International Day of Disabled People 3rd December 2006

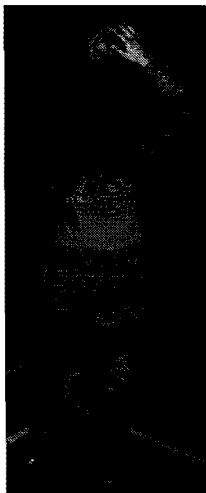
This was possibly the most ambitious event HRDF has ever staged. On a wet Sunday morning in December we all went up to the Phoenix Arts Centre in Hastings for what was to turn out to be a wonderful celebration of disability arts and culture. We started out the day with the official opening of the event and launch of the HRDF website by the Mayor of Hastings Cllr Maureen Charlesworth.

During the day there was plenty to see and do. Well known local disabled artist Lester Magoogan displayed his unique drawings and ARRC—a disability arts group based in Rye had a stall and encouraged people to have a go at mosaic making. In another room Decoda encouraged people to dance under sound beams to make their own tunes, Dab Community Arts lead a shadow puppets workshop, Tempo Art showed people how to play musical instruments from around the world, there was a self defence class and games of Boccia from Active Hastings. Everyone also enjoyed a great dance performance from the Pulse School of Movement.



Then there was the evening—and what an evening it was! The headline act was well known performer Caroline Parker, she entertained and amused us all with her amazing Sign Language Karaoke and her off the wall interpretation of well know songs such as Bohemian Rhapsody. We finished off the evening in style with three local bands and boogied to the music of Claire Hamill & Phil Hudson, 44 Thieves and One More Shot. The day was a great success and enjoyed by all who attend.

By Kev Towner Co Vice Chair



It only takes 30 minutes of moderate exercise every day to keep you feeling fitter and healthier. And now, Active Hastings offer opportunities for disabled people in Hastings and St Leonards to get active!

Active Hastings run a variety of programmes in a fun and relaxed atmosphere. All sessions are inclusive and there are specific sessions for people with disabilities. These fun sessions are also a really good way to meet new friends. Don't worry if you haven't done any exercise for years, all the sessions are tailored to your individual needs.

LDB Cricket Free!

Tuesdays 11.30am-12.30pm Horntye Park Sports
Sessions with a qualified coach from Priory Cricket Club, for people with learning disabilities.

Boccia, Short Mat Bowls and New Age Curling Free!

Wednesdays 10.30am -12.30pm YMCA
Indoor games that can be performed seated or standing.

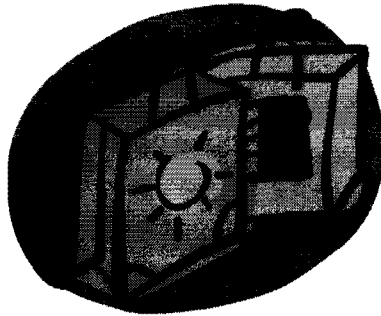
Filsham Valley Wheelers

Thursdays 3-5pm Filsham Valley School
Saturdays 11am-2pm Hillcrest School

We need your wheels! Come and try wheelchair basketball.
All abilities welcome

If you would like more information about sessions for people with disabilities please contact the Active Hastings team on 0845 274 1050 or pick up a copy of the Active Hastings programme at the Hastings Information Centre.

Shopmobility Access Guide



If you are having problems getting around Hastings Town centre, and find it hard to come in to town. Then help is at hand - Shopmobility have produced an access guide leaflet. This includes details of crossing points and disabled car parking. Copies are available from Shopmobility (8th Floor, Priory Meadow) or from the Hastings Information Centre.

Cycling in Hastings Town Centre

Hastings Borough Council plan to introduce a 14-month trial where cycling will be allowed in the pedestrianised areas of Hastings town centre. The trial will come into effect around summer of this year.

HRDF is against this proposed trial, as we believe that an increase number of cyclists in the town centre will increase danger to pedestrians. However, we recognise the need to promote cycling as an environmentally friendly alternative to using cars and the needs of responsible cyclists.

We have been working with the Hastings & St Leonards Seniors Forum to protest against the trial and on 2nd February 2007 a meeting was held between HRDF, the Seniors Forum, Age Concern, Hastings Urban Bikes (HUB), the Town Centre Manager and Sarah Cook from Hastings Borough Council. The aim of this meeting was to find ways of working together to ensure that the needs of all parties concerned are taken into account. We plan to work



By Paul Borthwick

together to ensure that the trial is properly publicised and that members of the public are aware of how they can make their views known.

Contact us on 01424 201201 enquiries@hrdf.org.uk with your views or contact Sarah Cook at Hastings Borough Council on 01424 783340.

Accessible Allotments

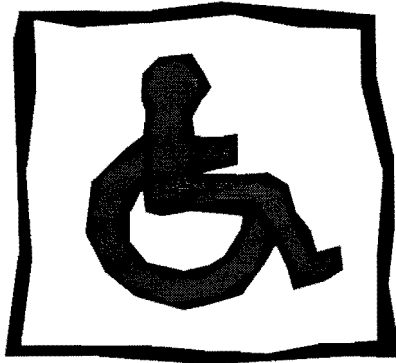


The Access Group has been working with Hastings Borough Council, Choice Allotments and the Greater Hollington Partnership to build an accessible allotment plot. The site chosen is in Blackman Avenue. There is disabled car parking, and easy access to the allotments. There is also going to be an accessible toilet available. Work is continuing on the site, and the grand opening will be in the spring of this year. There are already plans to expand the site as demand to use it has been amazing. We will keep you informed as to when it opens and how to use it.

By Paul Borthwick Co Chair Access Group



Access Group



The Access group continues to work to make sure that the built environment is as accessible as possible. We continue to object to planning applications that are inaccessible. As well as complaining to Hastings library and Debenhams about their lack of access.

We have been working with Rob Woods, the Town Centre manager and with Hastings Borough Council to improve access to the seafront and Town Centre. In Bexhill we are working with the De La Warr Pavilion to also improve access.

We are always keen to hear your views about access, so please contact us. We meet on the second Tuesday of each month, so if you are interested in coming along to a meeting please let us know.

We are still in need of a minute taker so if you are interested please contact the HRDF office on 01424 201201.

By Paul Borthwich co Chair Access Group

Get involved with the Supporting People programme

The East Sussex Supporting People team is consulting with people about how they want to get more involved. The programme pays for 'housing-related support' and services that help people to live independently. These are services such as sheltered housing and tenancy support, that help people find or live in their own home. Following consultation with staff and people using the services, a draft service user involvement policy has been written. The policy covers three main areas;

- Involvement with the way services are run;
- Involvement in work such as service reviews
- Involvement in planning and setting up services.

We now want to know what people think about our ideas These include:

- Training service users to carry out reviews
- Sending documents to people who have volunteered
- Setting up a service user group led by an advocate
- Employing the advocate to represent service users' views at meetings.

The draft policy and a short questionnaire are on **www.eastsussex.gov.uk/supportingpeople**

If you would like to complete our questionnaire and send it back to us you could win one of three £20 vouchers. The final date for feedback is Friday 20 April 2007.

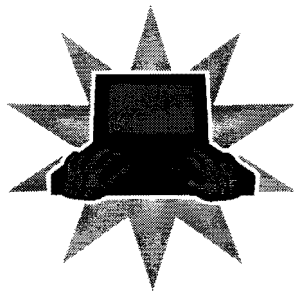
www.hrdf.org.uk

At our celebration of International Day of Disabled People on 3 December, we relaunched the HRDF website. We had been working on the design of the site for some time, and we asked Maureen Charlesworth, Mayor of Hastings, to "press the button" to make the website go live!!

We want the website to be a source of information for disabled people in Hastings and Rother. Areas of the site include:

- Membership information
- Information about the HRDF committee
- Latest news and events
- Current and past newsletters
- The work of the Access Group
- Issues affecting disabled people

The site needs to be accessible and usable by people with a range of different impairments who may or may not use different adaptive technology to access the internet, so we would be grateful for your feedback. We also want to include information on the site that is relevant to disabled people, so if there's something that you'd like to see, let us know.



Please visit the site at **www.hrdf.org.uk**
and tell us what you think!

By Theresa Hodge

Preventing Falls

Falls can have very serious effects for older people not just in terms of injury and, sometimes, long term health problems, but also reduced confidence and quality of life.

Age Concern Hastings has a part-time Falls Prevention Officer who works closely with health and care workers and older peoples' organisations and clubs to raise awareness of how to reduce the risk of falling. He also does research into what makes people fall and the impact which falling has on their lives. Complaints from older residents about uneven pavements and broken steps in the town have led to a campaign to make the streets safer for those on foot.

The Falls Prevention Officer is always happy to talk to groups and clubs about simple measures which older people can take to reduce the risk of suffering a fall.

For more information phone
David Bexhall
01424 426162,
or write to Age Concern at
50 Robertson Street,
Hastings
TN34 1HL.

