

**Shepway District Partnership Group**  
**Notes of meeting held on 4th October 2010**

**Feedback from September Kent Partnership Board Meeting**

Valuing Employment Now. Kathy Melling and Steven Chapman talked about what stops people when they try to find employment. People need more support to find and keep jobs. We talked about how to help older people to find employment.



Changing the Benefits System. We looked at the consultation document from the Government who are try to make the benefits system easier to use. The Government wants a system that stops people thinking it is not important to work.



**Update from Speaking Up Group**

Skillnet support 2 speaking up group. One group in Folkestone and one in New Romney. The Folkestone group has been working on doing something with shop windows in the town to make the town look better.



In New Romney the group has been looking at human rights and will be visiting local residential homes to tell them about this.



**Advocacy**

Advocacy Partners Speaking Up will soon be changing their name to VoiceAbility.



Emma Bates told us about advocacy and what an advocate does. Advocates help people to understand their rights, help people talk to professionals or make a complaint. They make sure people are listened to. If anyone needs an advocate they should ring 02033557141.



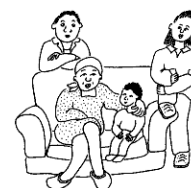
## Sports Development in Shepway

Della Gunn is the Sportslink Officer for Shepway. She is promoting sporting activities for people with learning disabilities in Shepway. If there is an sport you would like to do that is not available at the moment, Della can help find out information for you.



## Parenting and Relationships

Gill, Gemma and Zoe from the Kent Parenting Group talked to us about what it is like to be a parent with a learning disability. The Kent Parenting group support each other and know about their rights and choices. They train professionals to support parents and their children better and have easy to read information.



It is important to have lots of support from family and friends as well as medical staff. Once your baby is born you can get support and help from children centres like Surestart.



You can learn about being a parent with the right support. College courses can show how to make bottles, when to feed the baby on solid food and other parenting skills.

Before you decide to have a baby you should find out what its like to have a baby. You can talk to other people with children or at speaking up groups. It is not easy to be a parent. People should not be afraid to ask for advice. Surestart are very helpful to new parents and very friendly.



Children need to be safe, to learn new things, to be loved, to learn right from wrong, to be clean, healthy and warm.

As well as learning parenting skills at College, Health Visitors also run courses. You could volunteer at a playgroup or help at brownies, Surestart and family centres to get more experience of babies and children.



The group are hoping to get the CHANGE easy read parenting books in the local libraries. There is a book about being pregnant and also about you and your baby and books about toddlers. These are expected in mid October.



Lynn Mackay from the Community Learning Disability Team talked about family planning.

Not everyone in a relationship wants to have a baby. It is important to know where family planning clinics are held so you can get contraception if you want it.



Lynn provided information on where clinics are in Shepway. All the clinics should have easy read information in pictures and symbols. This information is also available from doctors. If you need a longer appointment at a Clinic you should ask for a longer time when you book.



Lynn also runs men's and women's groups on how to stay safe and healthy in a relationship.

We talked in our groups about parenting and relationships and what else we would like to see offered to parents with a learning disability.



## Melody Makers

Melody Makers would like some money for some musical instruments. The group sang a song and showed some pictures from their concerts.



The group has people from Summer Court and Dolphin Court as well as the Independent Living Scheme and Shepway Resource Centre, Jubilee House and some private residential homes.



People are encouraged to get involved in the group and take part as much as they want to. Some people like to just listen to the music.



Sarah, OT from Everlesy House, is supporting the project. She told us people are benefiting from the musical activity which helps people with their memory and self esteem. The music has brought people together in the community.

Monthly concerts are held at Summer Court. They are free to attend. I'm Alright Drama group will also be starting every Wednesday working with Melody Makers.



## **Operation Sunshine**

Lyn told us about this Charity based in Capel which sends food and clothes to Africa. Most of the things donated goes directly to Africa. If anyone has anything they would like to donate they should ring Lyn on 01303 862799 and she will let you know where to leave it or arrange to collect it.

