

Telford & Wrekin Local Involvement Network



Annual Report

1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010



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This annual report is available in two versions: a full version and a summary. Both can be downloaded from our website or supplied as a Microsoft Word or PDF attachment to an e-mail. The summary can be made available in a range of alternative formats including Braille, easy read, large print and audio tape. Translation into a number of languages other than English can also be arranged on request.

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Introduction: ‘A voice for the whole community’

Local involvement networks (LINKs) have been set up across England to give everyone the opportunity to influence the planning, commissioning and delivery of health and social care services by the NHS and their local council.

Involving patients, carers and service users makes a lot of sense: we know what our needs are better than anyone else, and we have first-hand experience of services and can say whether they meet our needs — or not.

Over the course of the last year Telford & Wrekin LINK has helped the community to make its voice louder, more audible, by making sure we were more visible — and by making it clear that we expected to be listened to about what works well and what needs to change. In surveys, focus groups, meetings and at public events you told us about your experiences and your concerns about health and social care; you gave your praise when services were excellent — and suggested improvements when you thought they were lacking.

Chief executives, directors and commissioners from the local authority, the primary care trust and the hospital trust met with us to discuss your feedback, listen to your concerns, and give commitments to improve services where needed; they saw us in board meetings, they invited us to sit on forums and in workshops, and they answered some challenging questions posed on your behalf about:

- acute care in local hospitals
- the accident and emergency service at the Princess Royal Hospital
- hospital maternity services
- family doctors and dentists
- the out-of-hours emergency health service (Shropdoc)
- the future of services at the Princess Royal Hospital and the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital
- the emotional support that is essential when permanent sight loss is diagnosed
- the provision of end-of-life palliative care
- safeguarding and supporting vulnerable adults, and older people and their carers
- foot care for older people and people with diabetes
- support for people with dementia, and for their carers.

And it isn't just talk — some real changes are being made. For example, NHS Telford & Wrekin has said it will use feedback from our Values Exchange online survey when it reviews the contract for out-of-hours emergency care later this year, and it has also agreed to fund a part-time eye clinic liaison officer for a 12-month trial period following lobbying by the local association for blind people, which the LINK supported.

Anyone with an interest in improving local health and social care can get involved — so why not join us now? By adding your voice to our voice you will help to make the LINK's voice the voice of the whole community.

Jean Gulliver

Chair, Telford & Wrekin LINK

About Telford & Wrekin LINK

Local involvement networks: what they do

Telford & Wrekin LINK is one of 152 local involvement networks ('LINKs') that were set up by Act of Parliament in 2008 to give everyone who uses (or has used, or may use) publicly-funded health and social care services in England a stronger 'voice' and powers to influence the kinds of services that are provided and the way they are delivered. They do this by:

- promoting and supporting the involvement of people in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local care services (health care and social care)
- enabling people to monitor and review the commissioning and provision of local care services relating to:
 - the standard of provision
 - whether and how local care services could be improved, and
 - whether and how local care services ought to be improved
- obtaining the views of people about their needs for — and their experiences of — local care services
- making such views known and making reports and recommendations about how local care services could or ought to be improved to people responsible for commissioning, providing, managing or scrutinising local care services.

The right to scrutinise local services means that the LINK is effectively the independent local 'watchdog' for health and social care. LINKs have clout because:

- they can ask for information about any aspect of health and social care services — and expect to get a response that is clear, comprehensive and prompt
- they can visit premises where health and adult social care services are provided — and expect to be allowed in to talk with people who are using those services
- they have a direct line to regulators so that any concerns about the general standards of provision, especially any that compromise patient safety, can be raised — and expect their findings to have sway.

All LINKs operate in accordance with their own constitution and code of conduct but are required to be publicly accountable for what they do. How they achieve this differs from one area to another; this is because the legislation acknowledges the importance of local circumstances and priorities in determining the way the local network operates.

How the LINK is organised

Every LINK in the country is organised slightly differently, though the geographical boundaries within which each LINK operates are based on the boundaries of the unitary authority that is responsible for providing social services (that is why in this area there is one LINK covering the Borough of Telford and Wrekin and another LINK covering Shropshire). Telford & Wrekin LINK covers:

- Telford South (Coalport, Ironbridge, Madeley, Sutton Hill, Coalbrookdale, Tweedale, Woodside)
- Telford Central (Lawley, Dawley, Lightmoor, Aqueduct, Hollinswood, Town Centre, Randlay, Stafford Park, St George's)

- North West Telford (Wellington, Shawbirch, Dothill)
- Telford North East (St George's, Priorslee, Oakengates, Ketley, Leegomery, Hadley, Hortonwood, Trench, Donnington, Wrockwardine Wood)
- Newport and the rural area of north Telford.

How the LINK is run

Anyone with an interest in improving health and social care locally can get involved in the LINK (you can find out how on page 34). The work of the LINK is overseen by the Central Management Group (CMG), which is like a board of governors that is accountable to the public. It consists of up to 16 elected or co-opted members — all volunteers — who have committed their time to drawing up and implementing the LINK's policies and work plans.

The LINK's constitution requires a new CMG to be formed each year by holding an election at the annual general meeting. If less than 16 members are elected up to four members may be co-opted by the CMG throughout the course of the year.

In 2009/10 the members of the CMG were:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ■ Roland Brown | ■ Jo Havell |
| ■ David Edwards | ■ Bob Kiernan |
| ■ Elizabeth Evans | ■ Val Lindley |
| ■ Ann Fletcher | ■ Cliff Murray |
| ■ Lynne George | ■ Dag Saunders |
| ■ Jean Gulliver
(chair from November 2009) | (acting chair April–November 2009, then vice-chair) |
| | ■ Derek Tremayne |

During the course of the year three members of the CMG resigned (Roland Brown, Elizabeth Evans and Cliff Murray) and three new members were co-opted: Muriel Fellowes, Charles Hannon and Lilian Owens (all co-opted in March 2010).

The LINK hosting service

In 2008 a three-year contract to provide the LINK hosting service was awarded to Staffordshire University. The role of the hosting service is to enable the LINK's members to carry out their various activities by providing them with advice and organisational support. In 2009/10 the hosting service team consisted of:

- Linda Seru, director
- Jamie Christian, co-ordinator (until September 2009)
- Marie Jones, administrator.

The core team was assisted from time to time by graphic designer Alison Francis and community worker Dawn Dcaccia. Two additional part-time staff will be recruited in 2010/11 to provide more administrative support and to encourage greater community involvement.

Full contact details for the CMG and the hosting service are on page 35.

Making a difference: activities and achievements in 2009/10

Annual general meeting

The first annual general meeting of Telford & Wrekin LINK took place on Monday 18 May 2009 in Meeting Point House in Telford. It was attended by 27 members of the public and nine representatives from local voluntary organisations including Telford & Wrekin Senior Citizens' Forum, Listen not Label (the newly-formed user-led organisation) and the Urostemy Association, as well as the local authority, Telford & Wrekin Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the West Midlands Ambulance Service.

The keynote speaker was Sarah Hill, principal lecturer in social work studies at Staffordshire University. Ms Hill talked about the transformation of adult social care services and the role that LINKs can play in helping to ensure that change is managed effectively and with sensitivity.

No election was required because the founding members of the CMG were elected until March 2010. Jo Havell and Laura Tullett, who were co-opted earlier in the year, were confirmed as members.

CMG, CMG sub-groups, and other meetings

The CMG met on seven occasions in 2009. Meetings of the sub-groups also took place, as follows:

- acute services (5)
- enter and view (3)
- end-of-life group (2)
- social care (2)
- work planning (3).

The minutes of all these meetings are posted on our website — www.telfordandwrekinlink.org.uk. Copies can also be obtained from the hosting service on request (see page 35).

A public meeting was held on 29 January in Meeting Point House to inform people about the forthcoming inspection of adult social care by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The aim was to encourage service users and groups that represent them to consider how they might work with the LINK to prepare for the inspection.

The public were also invited to take part in a series of focus groups in February and March to help develop questions for the Patient Experience Tracker system for use in acute and community settings.

The CMG's goals for 2009/10

The LINK's work plan for 2009/10 was agreed at the annual general meeting. A list of potential priorities was presented by the CMG and endorsed by those present, which led to the following six key goals being set:

- **Key goal 1:** To make the LINK stronger and more effective (see page 9).
- **Key goal 2:** To raise awareness of the LINK among community and voluntary organisations and encourage more of them to participate in its work (see page 10).
- **Key goal 3:** To develop a database of issues in adult social care services based on evidence of need and gaps in provision (see page 11).
- **Key goal 4:** To develop effective working relationships with policy makers, commissioners and providers in areas where feedback from service users indicates that improvements are required (see page 12).
- **Key goal 5:** To exercise the LINK's statutory powers: (i) to seek information when scrutinising health and adult social care services; (ii) to visit premises where health and social care is being delivered; and (iii) to contribute a third-party commentary on the annual health checks submitted to the Care Quality Commission (see page 13).
- **Key goal 6:** To scrutinise the provision of palliative care services and of accident and emergency services at the Princess Royal Hospital (see page 14).

Achieving our goals

Key goal 1: To make the LINK stronger and more effective

We strengthened the capacity of the LINK by:

- developing a clearer understanding of the CMG's role and purpose as the independent local watchdog for health and social care
- being clearer about the support needed from the host organisation to help us manage the growth and development of the LINK
- developing our understanding of how the NHS and the local authority plan, commission and provide services, and how the CQC monitors and regulates provision
- encouraging voluntary organisations and community groups to get involved in the LINK
- focusing our efforts on finding out which services work well and which need to change by asking patients, carers and service users to tell us about their experiences
- recruiting 'community champions' (see page 18).

What we will do in 2010/11. We will encourage people from a diverse range of backgrounds to stand for election to the CMG at the annual general meeting in May and arrange a structured induction programme for all new CMG members.

We will continue to encourage community and voluntary sector organisations to become more actively involved in the LINK as their involvement will enrich and strengthen the network. We will recruit and support community champions as their involvement will enable us to find out what the public thinks about services, to identify gaps in provision, and to highlight changes that are needed.

Key goal 2: To raise awareness of the LINK among community and voluntary organisations and encourage more of them to participate in its work

We raised awareness of the LINK among community and voluntary organisations by:

- telling them more about what we planned to do and how they could get involved
- inviting them to our annual general meeting
- asking them to identify priorities for inclusion in the LINK work plan
- encouraging them to invite us to their own meetings
- asking them to engage their members in surveys and focus groups.

We also succeeded in engaging more local organisations in the LINK by:

- asking them to help us identify barriers to their participation in the LINK
- addressing their misconceptions about the role of the LINK
- identifying what aims we had in common that would support joint working
- inviting them to add their logo to our survey materials
- sending them copies of surveys with FREEPOST reply envelopes
- providing them with details of our survey findings.

During the year we started to develop closer working relationships with:

- the Telford & Wrekin Senior Citizens' Forum
- Listen not Label (the user-led organisation)
- West Telford Association of the Visually Impaired.

What we will do in 2010/11. We will invite a wide range of local community and voluntary organisations to meet with us to discuss our respective aims so that we can work together in the future. We will also invite them to attend the LINK's annual general meeting on 19 May 2010 and encourage them to nominate representatives to sit on the CMG, or to get involved in its sub-groups.

Local groups will be encouraged to identify priorities for inclusion in the LINK work plan and to lead on — or get involved in — project work and other joint initiatives (including the possibility of their involvement in helping us to set up an advisory committee later in the year). The two new members of staff appointed by the hosting service will use some of their time to nurture relationships with more community and voluntary sector organisations, and this should help us to forge stronger partnerships with them.

Key goal 3: To develop a database of issues in adult social care services based on evidence of need and gaps in provision

By asking people to tell us what works and what needs to change we have been able to:

- identify improvements that the public would like to happen
- praise those adult social care services that are good (such as the home adaptations and falls prevention service)
- express concerns about those services that need to be improved (such as support for people with dementia and their carers)
- inform commissioners and providers about unmet needs and gaps in provision (such as timely support for people diagnosed with significant sight loss)
- recommend changes that will give people more control over the way that their needs are identified and met
- propose that the local authority considers how it can monitor the needs of adults who are at risk of becoming vulnerable so that support can be reviewed if their circumstances change without them having to seek a reassessment.

What we will do in 2010/11. We will use *'Don't just grumble — praise or rumble!'* (see page 36) to identify concerns and good practice and will develop other strategies for engaging people in discussions about health and social care issues as this is the starting point for participation and influence.

As a result of the feedback received from patients and carers in 2010/11 we will focus our resources on the arrangements for admission to and discharge from hospitals and nursing homes, and make recommendations on how these arrangements can be improved. We will do this by working with the Health Action Group of the Telford & Wrekin Senior Citizens' Forum.

We have also agreed to monitor the local authority's response to the recommendations that will be made by the CQC following its inspection of the service in the spring.

Key goal 4: To develop effective working relationships with policy makers, commissioners and providers in areas where feedback from service users indicates that improvements are required

We have developed our relationship with NHS bodies in Telford and Shropshire by:

- meeting with policy-makers, commissioners and providers in order to develop their understanding of the role of the LINK
- encouraging commissioners and providers to identify opportunities for the LINK to take part in service reviews and audits
- meeting with regulators to discuss how they can support our recommendations
- assisting the Engagement and Communications Governance Group (the ECGG) to evaluate the effectiveness of information provided to the public about options for the future of services provided at the Princess Royal Hospital and the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital
- sharing our survey findings with commissioners and providers and asking them to respond to specific issues.

What we will do in 2010/11. Our aim has always been to ensure that the LINK is seen as a useful resource to help the NHS and the local authority to understand and respond to the needs of people who use their services so that the limited resources of the NHS and the local authority will be used more effectively.

In 2010/11 the LINK will seek to give the community a stronger voice by:

- asking the board of NHS Telford & Wrekin to consider how the LINK can participate in board meetings so that we can contribute information to the debates
- providing details of our survey findings and other data at the various forums where we represent the public (see appendix 1)
- advising the ECGG about how best to engage with the public prior to the public consultation process on the options for the future of hospital services that will be taking place in the summer
- ensuring that the feedback from the maternity and family health survey carried out in November 2009 is used to inform the national survey of maternity services that will be taking place in summer 2010
- monitoring satisfaction with services recorded by the Patient Experience Trackers in acute and community settings, and working with the NHS bodies to identify how changes can be introduced to address particular areas of concern.

Key goal 5: To exercise the LINK's statutory powers: (i) to seek information when scrutinising health and adult social care services; (ii) to visit premises where health and social care is being delivered; and (iii) to contribute a third-party commentary on the annual health checks submitted to the Care Quality Commission

We have exercised the LINK's statutory powers to:

- seek information about the qualifications and experience of the nursing staff being recruited at the Princess Royal Hospital following patients' concerns about staffing levels on hospital wards
- participate in the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Telford Borough Council.

What we will do in 2010/11. We will continue to make judicious use of our powers to seek information when circumstances indicate that a more formal approach is warranted but our preference is to acquire information using less formal mechanisms wherever we can. We regularly ask for information from commissioners and providers and also use the forums attended by LINK representatives to seek — and to exchange — information about particular services.

In relation to our power to visit premises we will recruit and train authorised representatives and will publish a schedule of visits planned in 2010 in our annual work plan. Our focus in the year ahead will be on visits to hospitals and doctors' surgeries.

Key goal 6: To scrutinise the provision of palliative care services and of accident and emergency services at the Princess Royal Hospital

In scrutinising the provision of palliative care services and of accident and emergency services at the Princess Royal Hospital we have been able to ensure that the patient's perspective was explicit in:

- the End of Life Forum
- the audit of the accident and emergency service at the Princess Royal Hospital.

What we did to provide a patient's perspective at the End of Life Forum

Three members of the CMG represented the LINK at meetings of the End of Life Forum (which is managed by Shropshire PCT, the organisation which commissions end-of-life care) and also on the sub-groups set up to consider strategy, workforce planning and development, rapid response and choice, evaluation and audit (24/7 care). The LINK members contributed to the development of the forum's vision statement and values by providing a non-professional voice that has asserted the right of patients and carers to have their wishes heard and respected. The LINK members have:

- reinforced the importance of avoiding admission to hospital for people who are close to death when a preference to die at home rather than in an institution has been expressed
- introduced new ideas, including 'saying the unsayable', which enables difficult issues to be explored through the use of art
- developed links with the Severn Hospice, Shropshire County PCT, West Midlands Strategic Health Authority, South Staffordshire and Shropshire NHS Foundation Trust, CinCH*, local authorities in Telford and Shropshire, and supplied contacts in the community for the Compassionate Communities pilot project at Sutton Hill
- queried why no GPs were involved in the forum, as ensuring access to end-of-life support depends on GP practices adopting the 'gold standard' of care (a national guide to best practice).

What we will do in 2010/11. LINK members will continue to be involved in the End of Life Forum and will report on the progress being made in persuading providers to adopt the 'gold standard' of palliative care.

What we did to take part in an audit of the accident and emergency service at the Princess Royal Hospital

Four members of the CMG took part in the audit of the accident and emergency unit at the Princess Royal Hospital at the request of NHS Telford & Wrekin during the period 11–17 May 2009. The audit involved talking to members of the public in the waiting area and recording their reasons for using the accident and emergency service, asking them whether they had considered alternative options or been referred by their GP or Shropdoc, and the quality of the service being provided.

*Shropshire LINK calls itself Community Involvement in Care and Health (CInCH). Telford & Wrekin LINK co-chairs this committee with Shropshire CInCH because their respective communities use some services that are provided in Shropshire and some that are provided in Telford and Wrekin.

What we will do in 2010/11. We will review the progress that has been made in implementing the audit's recommendations and assess the difference it has made to the quality of the service. We will also use the experience gained from the audit to inform the review of the unscheduled emergency care contract which we have been invited to take part in as this service can help alleviate pressure on the accident and emergency service.

Publicising the LINK's activities and promoting community involvement

Telford & Wrekin LINK worked hard in 2009/10 to raise awareness of the role of the LINK throughout the local community. Our programme of engagement activities included:

- distributing thousands of leaflets, flyers and information packs
- publicising our work on local radio and in the local press using full page advertisements and tear-off feedback forms
- erecting information stands in supermarkets, shopping centres and libraries, and at carnivals and other public events
- setting up our own website and Values Exchange, an online survey tool
- publishing *Voicing your views*, a quarterly newsletter
- organising public meetings
- making presentations to local community groups, voluntary organisations and parish councils
- carrying out face-to-face and telephone surveys and holding focus groups.

Surveys

We have used surveys and questionnaires to help us find out what people think about local services. Although we endeavour to involve around 100 people in each survey we acknowledge that our limited resources means that this provides only a 'snapshot' that may need further investigation with a larger sample. We send electronic and paper copies of surveys that we are running to all the voluntary and community groups on our database and invite them to add their logo and make their members aware of the survey. (An overview of the feedback received from more than 500 people who took part in surveys in 2009/10 can be found in appendix 2.)

In 2009/10 we carried out the following:

- April–June 2009: The *Have your say* survey, which invited the public to identify the services that work well and those that need to be improved. A prize was offered for the best ideas to improve services.
- May–June 2009: A 'spotlight on acute services' survey of patients' experiences of the care they have received in hospitals.
- October–November 2009: A survey to gauge public awareness of the proposals developed by Telford & Wrekin PCT and Shropshire PCT for the future of local health services set out in *Developing health and health care: A strategy for Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin*.
- October 2009–ongoing: A survey of mother-and-toddler groups about maternity and family health services.
- January–February 2010: A survey of vulnerable adults and older people and their carers about their experiences of adult social care services.

Focus groups

Between February and March 2010 a total of nine *Ask me another!* focus groups were held in various venues around Telford, mainly as a way of finding out which aspects of their experience of the NHS patients and carers would like to give

feedback about. The objective was to help service providers in both community and hospital settings to improve the overall service.

We were invited to carry out this work by Telford & Wrekin PCT for two reasons: our independence, and our ability to contribute a range of viewpoints by drawing on the diversity within the network. By focusing on the patient 'journey' each group was able to identify common concerns: making an appointment, the quality of care, information and advice received, and the cleanliness of the facilities.

The group discussions have directly informed the selection of five questions that will be used on the hand-held Patient Experience Trackers to monitor patient satisfaction levels in both acute and community settings throughout 2010/11. The focus groups also allowed us to engage with a number of community and voluntary organisations that we had not previously worked with, such as MIND, a lunch club for African-Caribbean women, and members of the Polish community. A number of concerns specific to the people in each focus group were also identified, and these are being followed up with the directors of the relevant services.

Public meetings

In January 2010 we held a public meeting at Meeting Point House in Telford to raise awareness, especially among service users and their carers, of the forthcoming CQC inspection of services for vulnerable adults and older people in our area. In publicising the event we invited feedback from service users, and this led to over 50 responses which we shared with the CQC inspector and the borough council.

Website and Values Exchange

Although our website has been up and running since February 2009 we used it increasingly in 2009/10 to provide information about national and local consultations as well as our own meetings and activities. We increased significantly the amount of information that can be downloaded in PDF and Word formats (governance documents, agendas and minutes of meetings, etc). A key feature of the site is the Values Exchange online survey tool, which offers anyone the opportunity to say what they think about local services and to compare their views with those of other people. Our online surveys are also made available on paper so that people who do not have internet access can take part.

Newsletter

In March 2010 we published the first edition of our new regular newsletter, *Voicing your views*, and made it available as an A3-size poster (which was displayed in Telford's main public library with other literature about the LINK) and as a PDF download from our website. The first issue launched our '*Don't just grumble — praise or rumble!*' campaign to further encourage feedback from the public.

Events and promotions

In 2009/10 we added our presence to a range of local events and promotions, including:

- **Telford's Big Care Debate** (August–November 2009). We worked closely with Telford Borough Council and the Telford & Wrekin Senior Citizens' Forum to raise awareness of *Shaping the future of care together* (the government's national consultation on its Green Paper on options for the future funding of social care) and the Big Care Debate. We issued 200 copies of the Green Paper (and 50 easy read versions) and 1500 Big Care Questionnaires via a variety of outlets, and also arranged the keynote speaker from the Government Office for the West Midlands for the debate event. Many of those who attended the event said they found it interesting to explore the range of opinions generated by the issue of funding and changing expectations.
- **Community champions campaign** (December 2009–January 2010). We launched a recruitment drive for 'community champions' — people who want to work with the LINK to improve local services — with a publicity campaign based on posters, flyers and full-page advertisements (*Stick your neck out!, Be part of the heard..., Have you got the vision for change?*) in local newspapers, and roadshows at the main shopping centre, parish council venues, and a leisure centre. (Approximately 25 people expressed an interest, four of whom have since become active in the role: two with an interest in visual impairment, one with an interest in mental health, and one with an interest in a wide range of issues.) The community champions promotional pop-up stands are on semi-permanent display in Telford's libraries.
- **Your Community Matters** (March 2010). We took part in the Your Community Matters event at Telford Shopping Centre organised by the borough council. This enabled us to network with a wide array of statutory and voluntary organisations and raise awareness of the LINK. A further four people signed up as community champions at this event.

Presentations

In September 2009 we gave presentations at:

- the annual general meeting of the Shropshire and Mid Wales Branch of the Urostemy Association
- the Carers' Contact Centre
- Wellington Townswomen's Guild
- the Donnington Partnership
- the Silverthreads Mothers' and Toddlers' Group.

In March 2010 members of the CMG and the hosting service gave a presentation about the LINK to Madeley Parish Council.

Working with our partners

Statutory organisations

All of the local statutory bodies have identified opportunities to involve the LINK in committees, forums, workshops, strategic planning, service reviews and audits.

The organisations which have invited the LINK to become involved are listed below.

Voluntary and community organisations

From the outset we have encouraged all voluntary organisations and community groups in Telford to see themselves as members of the local network even if they are not directly involved in health and social care since what they do contributes to community well-being.

We currently have 37 local organisations on our database. Their involvement helps us to reach more people, and by becoming involved they can benefit from the LINK's statutory powers and influence decisions made by policy-makers, commissioners and providers who may decide to allocate resources to an initiative that may benefit their members. However, we recognise that few voluntary or community organisations have sufficient spare capacity to divert staff and volunteers' time to initiatives that may not be a key priority.

We had already realised that many members of the public, professionals and people who work for voluntary organisations were finding the concept of a local involvement network difficult to grasp, but early in 2009/10 we became aware that some local groups were apprehensive about working with us, fearing it would lead to a duplication of effort and unnecessary competition for resources. Hopefully, this issue has now been resolved by the actions we took to reassure these groups that the LINK exists to support their aims, not to compete with them.

Towards the end of the year four additional organisations indicated that they would like to become more actively involved — Accord Housing Association, Age Concern Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Senior Citizens' Forum, and Listen not Label (Telford's user-led organisation).

Organisations on which the LINK was formally represented in 2009/10

- Telford & Wrekin Borough Council
- Telford & Wrekin NHS Trust
- Shropshire County PCT
- Shrewsbury and Telford Hospitals NHS Trust

Some of the other organisations the LINK engaged with in 2009/10

- Care Quality Commission
- South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- West Midlands Ambulance Service.
- Telford & Wrekin Council for Voluntary Services

Examples of some of the working relationships established in 2009/10

- LINK representatives were granted speaking and voting rights and invited to take part in high-level policy meetings of the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital Partnership Board, the Joint Shropshire and Telford PCTs ECGG, and the Telford & Wrekin Borough Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- A LINK representative attended the monthly public meetings of the board of NHS Telford & Wrekin as an observer.
- The chair of the LINK and a member of the CMG met the chair, chief executive and the director and the commissioner for quality and patient and public involvement at NHS Telford & Wrekin on a regular basis to discuss key issues of interest to the local community.
- The vice-chair of the LINK and the director of the hosting service met the local authority's interim corporate director of adult care and support and Karen Kalinowski, head of performance and standards, for a briefing on the process prior to the CQC inspection of adult social care services in March 2010.

The CMG has developed a collective understanding of how services are planned, commissioned, delivered and regulated by inviting presentations from:

- Margaret Bamford and Julia Clarke, chair and corporate director, respectively, of Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust, on their vision for the future and how the LINK can support service quality (for example, through ward visits).
- Adrian Osborne, head of communications and business development at Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust, on ways in which the LINK can comment on the trust's Quality Accounts.
- Sian Huzsak, NHS Telford & Wrekin lead commissioner for quality and patient and public engagement, on the joint strategic needs assessment process, the use of Patient Experience Trackers, service reviews, and quality audits.
- Anna Charalambous-Green, NHS Telford & Wrekin lead commissioner for general practice, on the action being taken to improve Wellington GP Practice. She also invited the LINK to assist with service reviews.
- Penny Wilkinson, CQC local area manager, who explained how the CQC regulates health and social care standards.
- Councillor Derek White and Fiona Bottrill, chair and manager, respectively, of the Telford & Wrekin Borough Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Jo Winborne, service review and improvement manager at Telford & Wrekin Borough Council, who discussed the lay visitor programme pilot.
- Katy Driver, communications officer at Telford & Wrekin Borough Council, who explained how the LINK could support the Big Care Debate.

These presentations helped the CMG to develop a clearer understanding of its role and a deeper appreciation of how the NHS and local authority work.

How the LINK is funded and what it spends

The following tables show where the LINK's funding comes from, and how it was spent in 2009/10:

- Table A: Overview of funding available to the LINK for 2008–2011
- Table B: The LINK's budget for 2009/10
- Table C: A breakdown of what we spent running the LINK in 2009/10
- Table D: A breakdown of what was spent on operating the hosting service in 2009/10
- Table E: How much of the budget was spent in 2009/10 and how much will carry forward to 2010/11

All spending is governed by Staffordshire University's finance regulations which require strict adherence to financial management policies and procedures.

Table A: Overview of funding available to the LINK for 2008–2011

	Year 1 (2008/09)	Year 2 (2009/10)	Year 3 (2010/11)	Total
Total grant from the government to Telford borough council	119,000	120,000	120,000	359,000
Amount kept by the council to cover the cost of monitoring the contract awarded to Staffordshire University	5,950	6,000	6,000	17,950
Amount available to run the LINK	113,050	114,000	114,000	341,050

Table B: The LINK's budget for 2009/10

The total amount available to the LINK in 2009/10 was £160,465; this included the underspend carried forward from the 2008/09 budget and a rate rebate in addition to the grant.

	Amount available in 2009/10
LINK running costs	55,188.63
Hosting service operating costs	105,276.37
Total funding	160,465.00

Table C: A breakdown of what we spent running the LINK in 2009/10

What we spent	What it was spent on	Actual expenditure (to March 2010)
Annual subscriptions	Telford Council for Voluntary Service and <i>The Health Service Journal</i>	120.00
Postage	Correspondence, mailing newsletter and other promotional materials	321.79
Publicity and advertising	Advertisements (<i>Shropshire Star</i> , <i>Telford Journal</i> , <i>Market Drayton & Newport Advertiser</i> , PCT year planner); pop-up stands; announcements on local radio	17,005.87
Hospitality	Refreshments (LINK and CMG meetings, public forums, focus groups)	810.77
Computer equipment	2 laptops, portable printers and accessories for use by CMG members	2,572.14
General equipment	Display boards, projector, electric fans	1,608.37
Printing	'Champions' campaign flyers and posters; <i>Voicing your views</i> newsletter; business cards for CMG members	892.55
Consultancy	Values Exchange and CMG training event (PPE Solutions)	7,565.00
Technical and design work	LINK website updates	132.83
Stationery and consumables	Printer cartridges and paper for use by CMG members	420.67
Travel and subsistence	Reimbursement of car mileage (@40p per mile) for CMG and LINK members on LINK business; train fares to training and Active Participants events in London and Birmingham	1,977.82
Room hire	Use of Meeting Point House for public meetings and focus groups	158.42
Total		33,586.23

Table D: A breakdown of what was spent on operating the hosting service in 2009/10

What was spent by the hosting service to support the LINK	What it was spent on	Actual expenditure (to March 2010)
Telephone, fax and broadband	Line rental; mobile rental; call charges; Internet Service Provider charges	1,124.44
Postage	Use of FREEPOST service and other special mail	110.49
Management fees	Services provided by Staffordshire University (human resources, financial management, line management and supervision of staff, IT support, media relations)	9,741.00
Hospitality	Bottled water (there are no kitchen facilities or taps in the office)	109.54
Insurance premiums	Public liability insurance	366.56
Printing	Headed paper, business cards	113.85
Consultancy (training, technical support, web design, publications)	Production services (editorial, design) for promotional materials, annual report, newsletter, etc; website training and support	5,143.13
Rent and service charges	Office rent and utilities, security and maintenance charges; cleaning of communal areas	9,787.74
Minor improvements	Lock change and additional keys	51.75
Stationery and consumables	Printer cartridges and paper for photocopier; general office supplies	2,359.33
Staff travel and subsistence	Reimbursement of car mileage (@40p per mile) for staff on LINK business	1,028.83
Staffing costs	Salaries, pensions, National Insurance	51,240.38
Agency staff	Additional support for administration and community engagement	5,981.62
Total		87,158.66

Table E: How much of the budget was spent in 2009/10 and how much will carry forward to 2010/11

Expenditure in 2009/10		LINK running costs	Hosting service operating costs
Amount actually spent in 2009/10	120,744.89	33,586.23	87,158.66
Balance at year end to carry forward to 2010/11	39,720.11	21,602.40	18,117.71

What the LINK plans to do in 2010/11

CMG meetings

In 2010 the CMG will meet on **12 July**, **13 September** and **15 November**. All meetings will start at 10am and will usually finish at 1pm. (Dates of CMG meetings in 2011 will be posted on the website later in the year together with the dates of sub-group meetings.)

CMG meetings are usually held at the LINK office in Donnington (see page 35 for directions).

This year's annual general meeting will be held on **Wednesday 19 May 2010** in Meeting Point House, Southwater Square, Telford TF3 4HS. The meeting will start at 7pm and will include the annual elections to the CMG.

The LINK's work plan priorities

The work plan priorities outlined below are indicative only and are subject to review by the CMG after the annual general meeting and elections on 19 May.

Key goal 1: To continue to raise public awareness of the LINK

What we will do. We will continue to increase awareness of the LINK by:

- providing information about the LINK in places where the public go, including First Point (a multi-agency information and advice service in Civic Offices), parish council offices, hospitals, clinics and surgeries, community centres, mother-and-toddler groups, youth clubs, social clubs, sports clubs, and work places
- publicising our activities in the press using advertisements and media releases
- distributing leaflets, flyers, posters and other promotional materials via network members
- being part of the Your Community Matters event programme
- erecting displays in shopping centres and at local community events
- making presentations to local voluntary organisations and community groups
- making presentations to senior managers in the local authority and the NHS
- making presentations to parish councils
- subscribing to Patient Opinion (an online message board for patients to comment on their experience of health services).

How we will measure success. Over the last twelve months we have tripled the number of active participants on the LINK database and now send information to more than 500 people in Telford. Around 80 people have taken part in more than one survey or focus group. In 2010/11 our aim is to raise the number of individuals who are actively involved in the LINK to 1,500 and to increase the percentage who get involved in at least two LINK activities to 25 per cent. We also aim to enlist 100 local organisations and triple the number we have relationships with.

Key goal 2: To ensure that people who are ‘seldom heard’ have a stronger voice

What we will do. The LINK will continue to gather evidence of needs and gaps in services for presentation to commissioners and monitor how they use this evidence to make a difference to health outcomes. In particular we will pursue the concerns expressed by those black and minority ethnic groups and mental health service users who participated in the ‘*Ask me another!*’ focus groups and monitor whether service improvements were implemented. We will work more closely with Listen not Label to involve people with physical, sensory and learning disabilities in the LINK. We will also work in partnership with NHS Telford & Wrekin’s Community Engagement Team to evaluate the Health Champions Open College Network accredited course and will invite the Health Champions to work with us.

How we will measure success. Young people aged 13–19, men, people from black and minority ethnic groups, people with physical, sensory and learning disabilities and people who use mental health services will be more engaged with policy-makers, commissioners and providers as a result of their involvement in the LINK.

Key goal 3: To ensure that people who need dialysis or a kidney transplant receive the care and support they need

What we will do. We will assess the current level of compliance with the National Service Framework for Renal Care by scrutinising the quality and range of local service provision. We will invite people who use the renal unit to assess the quality of service and also ask people who may need the service in the next few years for their views.

How we will measure success. Psychological support to help prepare people for dialysis and kidney transplants will be introduced and greater privacy and comfort will be provided for patients receiving dialysis.

Key goal 4: To ensure that patients in the Princess Royal Hospital and the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital receive the best care possible

What we will do. We will collect details of patients’ experiences by using ward visits, audits and discharge surveys to develop an evidence base that we can use to evaluate the quality of care management. We will analyse feedback from the Patient Experience Trackers used in acute settings to identify concerns about the quality of nursing care being provided. We will monitor the use of mixed wards and require the PCT and the acute trust to explain what their plans are to phase them out. We will use the LINK’s representation on the Improvement Programme Delivery Group and the Community Engagement Forum to highlight concerns identified by patients about hospital services in Telford and Shrewsbury. We will comment on the draft Quality Accounts that will be produced for the first time in 2010 by the acute hospital trust, the Severn Hospice and South Staffordshire and Shropshire NHS Foundation Trust. We will use our relationship with Staffordshire University to consider pre-registration training issues and the impact of the graduate nursing programme.

How we will measure success. Patients and carers will report increased satisfaction with the quality of care being provided

Key goal 5: To ensure that people who use mental health services receive the care and support they need when and where they need it

What we will do. We will work with people of different ages who use community and acute mental health services to assess the progress being made in implementing the national New Horizons strategy and the introduction of the Time for Change anti-stigma programme. We will assess how extensively service users' experiences have been used to influence the acute and community mental health service, including the proposals to redevelop Shelton Hospital, and will make recommendations on how to strengthen arrangements for involving them in the future. We will also seek to involve mental health advocates and the governor members of the South Staffordshire and Shropshire NHS Foundation Trust.

How we will measure success. We will ask people who use mental health services to identify examples of how they have been involved in service planning and design and how their views have influenced the way services are delivered by all health trusts (i.e. the foundation trust and the primary, acute and ambulance trusts).

Key goal 6: To ensure that people who need social care and their carers receive a fair and thorough assessment of their needs and a care 'package' that meets their needs

What we will do. We will continue to contribute to the review of the assessment process by Putting People First and will monitor its impact by asking service users, and their carers and advocates, to identify the difference it is making to the support they receive. We will look into the appeals process to see how well it is working. We will also monitor the implementation of the recommendations for improvements to services for vulnerable adults and older peoples' services made by the CQC following the inspection in March 2010. We will work with the Telford & Wrekin Senior Citizens' Forum on the effectiveness of discharge arrangements to ensure that the level and timeliness of support being provided for older people when they leave hospital is as good as it can be.

How we will measure success. We will identify changes that are needed in the way the local authority and the NHS work together to assess the health and social care needs of older people and vulnerable adults, and we will monitor how support is provided (especially prior to admission to hospital and on discharge) as a way of measuring whether our recommendations were listened to and acted upon.

Appendix 1: Organisations which have invited the LINK to represent the community

NHS Telford & Wrekin

Forum name: Board meetings

Purpose: To listen to reports outlining changes in policy and practice and to identify issues that may require follow-up by the LINK

Frequency: Monthly

Input*: 130

LINK rep: CMG rota

Forum name: Meetings with chief executive, chair, director and commissioner for patient and public involvement

Purpose: To discuss strategic and operational changes being planned by the PCT and to identify how the public's views can be taken into account

Frequency: Bi-monthly

Input*: 40

LINK rep: Jean Gulliver and Dag Saunders

Forum name: Sponsor group for new GP practice and health centre for Telford & Wrekin

Purpose: To help with plans to establish walk-in centres

Frequency: Monthly from April–August 2009

Input*: 12

LINK rep: Bob Kiernan

Forum name: Dignity and Dementia Strategy Steering and Implementation Group

Purpose: To identify better outcomes for patients, especially older people with dementia and other vulnerable adults

Frequency: 4–6 meetings per year

Input*: 25

LINK rep: Dag Saunders and Jean Gulliver

Forum name: Rapid discharge development workshop

Purpose: To contribute the patient's perspective to discussions and to help identify improvements to practice

Frequency: One-off event

Input*: 6

LINK rep: Jean Gulliver and Dag Saunders

Forum name: Patients' experiences of being a hospital in-patient

Purpose: To contribute the patient's perspective to discussions and to help identify improvements to practice

Frequency: One-off event

Input*: 6

LINK rep: Jean Gulliver and Dag Saunders

*Number of hours in 2009/10

Joint PCT

Forum name: 2020 clinical vision workshop

Purpose: To consider the rationale for hospital and community service options in 2020

Frequency: One-off

Input*: 6

LINK rep: Bob Kiernan

Forum name: Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital 2020 Option Development Group

Purpose: To contribute a community perspective to the development of the strategic health review process

Frequency: Bi-monthly

Input*: 30

LINK rep: Bob Kiernan

Forum name: Shropshire and Telford Priorities and Policy Advisory Committee

Purpose: To contribute a community perspective to the discussion about treatments and other services recommended for implementation

Frequency: Monthly (under review)

Input*: 0 (due to cancellation)

LINK rep: Dag Saunders

Forum name: Shropshire Palliative Care Group (and sub-groups)

Purpose: To contribute a community /patient perspective to the development and implementation of policy and practice

Frequency: Monthly

Input*: 75

LINK rep: Anne Fletcher, Lynne George and Jo Havell

Forum name: Engagement and Communications Governance Group

Purpose: To contribute a community perspective to the raising awareness phase of the strategic health review public communications strategy

Frequency: Monthly from April–December 2009

Input*: 35

LINK rep: Bob Kiernan

*Number of hours in 2009/10

Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital

Forum name: Continuous Improvement Steering Group (renamed Improvement Programme Delivery Group in early 2010)

Purpose: To be a 'critical friend' and contribute the patient's perspective on service reviews and development

Frequency: Monthly

Input*: 60

LINK rep: Bob Kiernan and Laura Tullett

Forum name: Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital Community Engagement Forum

Purpose: To contribute ideas on how to engage patients and the public in service planning and development

Frequency: Quarterly

Input*: 20

LINK rep: Jean Gulliver

Forum name: Stakeholder Steering Group for Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital Foundation Trust Status

Purpose: To consider the timescale and other arrangements for the trust to become a foundation trust (which is a mandatory requirement)

Frequency: Bi-monthly

Input*: 16

LINK rep: Bob Kiernan

Forum name: Partnership Board/Forum

Purpose: To provide a community perspective on the board's deliberations

Frequency: Bi-monthly

Input*: 10

LINK rep: Bob Kiernan

Forum name: Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital Quality Accounts Consultation Group

Purpose: To develop an understanding of the new reporting process so that CMG can contribute constructive feedback

Frequency: Quarterly (from 2010)

Input*: 2

LINK rep: Jean Gulliver and Dag Saunders

Forum name: Care with Dignity Steering Group

Purpose: To develop better outcomes for older and vulnerable patients by contributing the patient's and carer's perspectives

Frequency: Quarterly

Input*: 16

LINK rep: Jean Gulliver

Forum name: Launch of renal unit at the Princess Royal Hospital

Purpose: To celebrate the opening of the renal unit and the role of carers in supporting dialysis patients

Frequency: One-off

Input*: 3

LINK rep: Jean Gulliver

*Number of hours in 2009/10

Telford Borough Council

Forum name: Putting People First (forum and board)

Purpose: To contribute the community's perspective to the transformation of adult social care services

Frequency: Bi-monthly

Input*: 30

LINK rep: Jean Gulliver and Val Lindley

Forum name: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Purpose: To provide independent scrutiny of health and social care services provided by the council and the NHS

Frequency: Monthly

Input*: 50

LINK rep: Val Lindley

Forum name: Falls Prevention Forum

Purpose: To contribute ideas to how older people can maintain their independence by improving their mobility and preventing falls

Frequency: Quarterly

Input*: 10

LINK rep: Jean Gulliver

Forum name: Contract management meetings

Purpose: To contribute the LINK's views on contract performance

Frequency: Quarterly

Input*: 6

LINK rep: Jean Gulliver

Voluntary sector

Forum name: Listen not Label: A User-led Organisation for Disabled People and Carers in Telford and Wrekin

Purpose: To develop a shared understanding of how the LINK and the user-led organisation can work together to improve outcomes for people with physical, sensory and learning disabilities

Frequency: Monthly

Input*: 36

LINK rep: Lynne George

Forum name: Age Concern Shropshire

Purpose: To contribute the experiences of older people to the Older Persons Partnership Board

Frequency: Ad hoc

Input*: 5

LINK rep: Jean Gulliver

*Number of hours in 2009/10

Other

Forum name: LINks Active Participants Forum

Purpose: To enable elected members and active participants in the West Midlands to share good practice on developing and sustaining LINks

Frequency: Bi-annually

Input*: 40

LINk rep: Jo Havell and Laura Tullett

Forum name: 4th UK Dementia Congress

Purpose: To find out about emerging international good practice in dementia care

Frequency: Annual

Input*: 40

LINk rep: Jean Gulliver

Forum name: Dementia Diagnosis and Beyond — Staffordshire University Centre for Ageing and Mental Health, NHS West Midlands, South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Purpose: To consider the implications of research findings on policy and practice

Frequency: One-off event

Input*: 8

LINk rep: Jean Gulliver

Forum name: Meetings with chair of CinCH

Purpose: To discuss matters of mutual interest and to identify opportunities for joint working

Frequency: Ad hoc

Input*: 6

LINk rep: Jean Gulliver

*Number of hours in 2009/10

Appendix 2: A summary of the feedback from people who took part in our various surveys and campaigns

Positive feedback was received about the following services in particular:

- The information and advocacy provided by the Carers' Contact Centre, Telford Racial Equality and Diversity Partnership (now called THREAD), the A4U advocacy service, and the Citizens' Advice Bureau.
- The new walk-in centres in the town centre and at the Princess Royal Hospital.
- Wellington Road GP surgery in Newport for providing a flexible and prompt appointment system.
- The End of Life Team (palliative care) and the Severn Hospice.
- The staff of the renal and stoma units for the practical and emotional support they provide to both patients and carers.
- The falls prevention service and the home adaptations service for providing practical aids and support to older people and people with disabilities to enable them to achieve greater independence.

Mixed feedback was received about:

- **Shropdoc (the unscheduled emergency care service).** Most people reported this as being good but expressed concerns about remote diagnosis over the telephone and the difficulty in obtaining a home visit.
- **The process for assessing entitlement to adult social care.** Some people found the process overly bureaucratic and not at all user-friendly, which deterred them from lodging an appeal or seeking a review even when their circumstances had changed.
- ***Developing health and health care: A strategy for Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.*** The level of understanding about the options outlined in this document for the Princess Royal Hospital and the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital was very patchy. Members of the Senior Citizens' Forum appeared to be the most informed. However, people who were not involved with a voluntary organisation or community group demonstrated a very limited understanding of the issues or implications — and in many cases a complete lack of awareness. Very few people seem to understand that many of the services that have traditionally been provided in hospitals are increasingly being commissioned and delivered in community settings.
- Access to foot care for people with diabetes and older people — some people have found it easy to receive a service but others complain that it is virtually impossible.

Negative feedback was received about:

- Unhelpful, abrasive behaviour and allegations of racist attitudes by reception staff in some surgeries.
- The lack of timely support for people with dementia, and for their carers, both at home and in hospital.

- The difficulty of getting through to the doctor's surgery via telephone to make an appointment, and then getting one at a time that is convenient.
- The difficulty of getting a doctor's appointment within a few days, especially at Wellington surgery.
- The difficulty in getting to see the doctor of your choice.
- The limited availability of the online 'choose and book' appointments system.
- Hospital discharge plans — many people thought these were either ineffective or not always fully implemented.
- The quality of nursing care (staffing levels, attentiveness, caring attitudes) at the Princess Royal Hospital and the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.
- The continuing use of mixed hospital wards.
- The poor standard of cleanliness on the maternity wards at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.
- The practice of carers' assessments either not being offered or being carried out in the presence of the person they are caring for.
- Some residential care homes which require families to provide supplementary food and arrange for laundry to be done.
- Inadequate emotional and practical support (such as the provision of information about support services) for people at the eye clinic when permanent sight loss is diagnosed.
- The frequent closure of the hydrotherapy pools at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital and the Princess Royal Hospital which adversely affects the health and well-being of people with arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions.

Getting involved in the LINK

Who can get involved?

The LINK is run by volunteers so anyone who uses local services, or may use them in the future, or is a carer of someone who uses them, can get involved. And if you have health or social care needs that aren't being met because there is no service that caters for you at present, or the service is not easy to use, you have all the more reason to take an active interest in the LINK. You don't need any special qualifications or prior experience — just a desire to help improve health and social care services locally.

If you would like to participate as an individual service user or as a representative of a local voluntary organisation or community group there are several LINK projects you could help to develop. The CMG does not want to duplicate activities that are already taking place, so if you are in a local network it makes sense to get involved in the LINK as it will give you greater power and influence.

Individuals or representatives of local groups who wish to become involved can contribute to the LINK in a number of ways, either:

- as an elected member of the CMG
- as an authorised representative (or visitor)
- as an active participant
- as a community champion.

What do LINK members and participants do?

Members of the CMG need to commit some time to attending meetings or representing the LINK on local panels and forums, but everyone else can choose to get involved as often — or as little — as they like. All skills and interests can be utilised: from organising events and displays to helping with administration and marketing. For instance, you could:

- take part in surveys and focus groups
- organise local events
- set up a project about an issue of interest to you
- help with publicity and promotion
- help us to develop our knowledge through internet research
- provide administrative support in the LINK office
- attend meetings as a LINK representative and provide feedback.

Expenses are reimbursed for approved activities.

How can I get involved?

You can get a membership form from our website or from the hosting service at the address below. If you are interested but don't want to be actively involved you can register your details and ask to be kept informed of activities and events in your area. You can also take part in LINK surveys by post, e-mail or telephone.

How can I find out more?

You can find out more about Telford & Wrekin LINK by:

- visiting our website: www.telfordandwrekinlink.org.uk
- reading our newsletter, *Voicing your views*
- attending meetings.

How can I get in touch?

You can get in touch by:

- calling **01952 614180** (please leave a message on the answerphone if necessary)
- e-mailing us at enquiries@telfordandwrekinlink.org.uk
- writing to us at: **Telford & Wrekin Link
c/o Staffordshire University
FREEPOST ST655
Beaconside
Stafford ST18 0BR**

You can also come along to a CMG meeting. These take place in public approximately every six weeks, usually at the LINK offices:

**Suite 1, Conwy House
St George's Court
St George's Road
Donnington
Telford TF2 7BF**

(To find us turn into St George's Industrial Estate by the Arc carwash, which is opposite Asda. Drive to the end of the road and park outside Conwy House, which is the last building on the left.)

‘Don’t just grumble — praise or rumble!’

The right to speak out if something goes wrong — and also to give praise when it works well — is at the heart of what the LINK stands for: a stronger voice for the whole community. Hence our slogan for 2010 is: *‘Don’t just grumble — praise or rumble!’*

If you have experienced something going wrong with the NHS or a social care service run by the council, or a voluntary organisation or an independent provider, ring our new hotline and ‘rumble’ them.

Equally, if you have had excellent service ring the hotline to praise them and say ‘thank you’. Your acknowledgement that a service is making a difference may mean that it can be developed to reach more people in other parts of Telford.

Only people who use these services can help us identify those that deserve a gong — and those that need a shake up.

If there is a service you think we need to look at ring the hotline on **07833 400472 at any time** (or during office hours call our landline 01952 614180) and give us the following details:

- the service you are grumbling about (or praising)
- what happened (or did not happen)
- where it took place
- when it took place
- who was involved
- what changes need to be made.

If the quality of local health services or adult social care services has exceeded your expectations, or if they have fallen short of your expectations, please don’t keep it to yourself — tell us. We want to find out which services deserve praise — but if they simply aren’t good enough we want you to tell us what went wrong. That way we can tell the poorer services what they need to do to get better — and help the already good services to become great.

We welcome your feedback

Please use this form to tell us:

One example of how the NHS has served you (or someone you care for) well	
One example of how the NHS has served you (or someone you care for) badly	
One example of a social care service that has served you (or someone you care for) well	
One example of a social care service that has served you (or someone you care for) badly	

What should the LINK stop doing?	
What should the LINK start doing?	
What should the LINK continue to do?	

Please give us your contact details so we can send you our next newsletter and invite you to take part in a future LINK survey or focus group:

Your name:

Address:

Post code:

E-mail:

Telephone: