

Bulletin #31 - April to June 2024

It's Spring!

Spring is finally here – seasonal wildlife is returning and plants are starting to bloom.

We're on the move, so it's important to note that during this period, we are not conducting standard appointments. Our reception and Church Street premises are **now closed** to visitors – this bulletin contains details on how to get in touch with us whilst we transition to our new home.

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We've also produced an audio version of this bulletin for those that would prefer to listen to it rather than read – visit disability-equality.org.uk/bulletin-31/ to listen.

We're on the move

We hope this message finds you well. We're reaching out to share some important updates regarding our move to a new home – the 'Disability Equality Community Hub' and the temporary adjustments to our services.

Our new home (DENW's 5th home) will be: Bannister House, Sedgwick St, Preston. However, the building is currently being used by our friends at Caritas Care to provide support services for local disabled people – so we cannot yet move into the building.

Postal address, from the 5th of April will be:

Disability Equality (nw) Ltd, First Floor, Bannister House, 23 Sedgwick St, Preston, PR1 1TP.

Whilst we wait patiently for them to move out, our staff will be working from alternative premises without reception/drop in facilities – all services are still open and very much ready to help you. You can contact us via the following details...

Lancashire Independent Living Service

lils@disability-equality.org.uk

01772 558863 Option 1

Safety First Project

safetyfirst@disability-equality.org.uk

01772 558863 Option 2

Supported Banking

supportedbanking@disability-equality.org.uk

01772 558863 Option 3

General Advice

hello@disability-equality.org.uk

01772 558863 Option 4

Text: 07841 017472

We anticipate that the move will be gradual, with all of our services being delivered from the new hub by April, just in time for Spring! We will obviously keep you updated (if you're not already on our membership list please email heather@disability-equality.org.uk and will let you know much more about the new location and our plans as soon as we can).

Please note, that in preparation for this transition, we're undertaking some necessary work at our current premises on Church Street, and packing up our belongings – as we've been in the building 24 years it may take a while 😊 We also want to leave the building in as good order as we found it for our landlords.

Our Reception at Church St and the building, will be closed to visitors from **Friday 22nd of March 2024**.

In the coming weeks, our team will be focusing on these preparations, and whilst we are doing everything we can to minimise any disruption this may cause, there will be some inevitable disruption to our services. It's important to note that during this period, we are not conducting standard appointments, nor are we closing our doors entirely. Instead, as we progress with our move from Church Street, some events and activities may be hosted at alternative venues. We are dedicated to maintaining our support services during this period, and all contact methods via phone, text, and email will remain available for those who need assistance.

We kindly ask for your patience and understanding as we navigate these changes. For any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. Your support during this time is invaluable, and we look forward to emerging from this transition stronger, with enhanced capabilities to serve you from our new premises. We believe in doing things well, and with your support, we'll achieve just that.

Also please remember, our friendship Friday drop-in sessions are held from 1pm – 3pm every Friday at the Olive Cafe, Lune St Methodist Church. Refreshments are free and staff are on hand for any queries you may have.

Thank you for your continued support.

Warm regards,
Mel
DENW CEO

Remembering a friend

It is with great sadness that we announce the sudden death of one of our much-loved friends and member Davina Hinchliffe, also known to many of you as David.

Davina was the very first member of staff for Disability Equality (nw) Ltd, back in 1996 when we were known as Preston Information Project, a small project based initially in Moor Lane Resource Centre.

Although Davina's employment only lasts a year, her relationship with us lasted a lot longer, she was a Volunteer supporting many different services over the years, a Trustee, a Hate Crime Ambassador, a proficient trainer and guest speaker and a good friend to many of us until the day she died.

Davina loved to chat and she loved to laugh, her enthusiasm for life was infectious and you always knew when she was in the room – she was very caring, regularly asking how we were and calling in to see us just to say hello.

People described Davina as being a real 'character' and that's exactly what she was – a huge character who met life's challenges head on and, whilst life wasn't always easy for her, she lived her life being herself and enjoyed it – always evident by her big smile and infectious laugh – she touched the lives of everyone she met – and you would always come away smiling.

We will miss her a lot.

Rest in Peace Davina.



A celebration of Davina's life is being organised for Thursday 9th May (her birthday), 1pm – 3pm.

Further details will be circulated nearer the time.

LCC Consumer Alerts - March 2024

Beware driveway services

Reports have been received of cold callers in the **Thornton Cleveleys area** knocking on doors offering to clean your driveway or patio and, in some cases, offering to tarmac or re pave your driveway. Always shop around, get three quotes, and always use know local traders.

Beware cold callers offering tree cutting services

Reports have been received in the **Ribble Valley area** of cold callers offering tree and shrub cutting services.

Concerns of very poor work and excessive costs, which sometimes escalate after the work has been done have been detailed. Be wary of contacting services via flyers, use known local trades people.

Beware bogus roof repairers

A resident in the **Kirkham area** hired a roofer, who was delivering flyers advertising his services, to carry out a reroof to their home, only to have the job escalate with extra work allegedly required to strengthen the roof and stop leaks. After £1000's had been obtained from the householder, they were targeted by another roofer who purported to be able to rectify issues left by the previous roofer. It is suspected that the second roofer was working in conjunction with the initial scammers. The householder did not part with any further monies.

Information about current scams can be found at Facebook facebook.com/StanleyDards/

Guttering scam

A resident in the **Fulwood area**, after contacting a trader from an online trader platform, agreed to work to their guttering and dry verges. The trader asked for full payment upfront, claiming it was for materials and then only partially completed the work which will now cost the householder around £500 to have rectified and finished. Please be wary of traders who ask for payment up front and can begin the job straightaway. Use caution when dealing with online trader platforms – carry out independent checks, look online for any reviews and always get more than one quote for the work.

Cold callers offering repair work

Reports have been received regarding a man aged 30s/40s, cold calling vulnerable residents in the **Clitheroe area**, misleading them as to work required. In one case he claimed there were loose slates on the roof, in another case, that the gutters were blocked. The claims were untrue in both cases. Fortunately, neither resident contracted with this trader. Trading Standards advice is to always say no to cold callers.

The Safetrader scheme can help you find a local trader, contact [0303 333 1111](tel:03033331111) or you can go online to www.safetrader.org.uk.

Doorstep crime

A rogue trader or bogus caller may call uninvited to your home with the intention of tricking you into letting them in so that they can steal or persuade you to hand over money for a product or service you don't need or at an inflated price. Older adults in particular are at risk.

They will often use fear as a way of persuading you to have the work done. They may tell you that, if they don't do the work right now, the house may be in danger of major damage.

Help to deal with rogue traders and bogus callers

For help you can call [Citizens Advice](http://CitizensAdvice.org.uk) on [0808 223 1133](tel:08082231133).

How to protect yourself from doorstep crime

- Never agree to have any work done as a result of a cold call. Don't make snap decisions and don't be pressurised into having the job done.
- If you think work needs doing to your home, get quotes from two or three traders. Ask friends and relatives to recommend a reputable business.
- Ask for the full name and address from a trader before considering dealing with them. Never rely solely on a mobile phone number.
- Ask for a written quotation detailing all the proposed work and a final price for the job.
- Only pay once the work is completed to your satisfaction. Don't pay cash. Don't pay money up front for trader's materials.

- Check the identity of all callers to your home. Ask for photo identification even if the caller claims to be from a utility company, the police or local authority. Check it carefully with the telephone number in the phone book or on their website, not the number on the ID.
- Do not keep cash in your home no matter how well you think it is hidden. Never pay traders in cash as this is an indication that you may have more cash on the premises.

Report a scam

If you think you have been the victim of a scam or you suspect a scam, please call the Action Fraud helpline on [0300 123 2040](tel:03001232040) or visit the [Action Fraud](https://www.actionfraud.gov.uk) website.

If you receive an electronic scam, you can forward it to Lancashire County Council Trading Standards at tsscams@lancashire.gov.uk and report@phishing.gov.uk - they might be able to stop other people being scammed.

If you've been scammed through the post

Royal Mail investigates postal scams. If you've received something in the post you think is a scam, send it to 'Freepost Scam Mail'. Include the envelope it came in and a completed scam mail report. You can [download a scam mail report](#) from Royal Mail or call them and ask for a form and pre-paid envelope.

Email: scam.mail@royalmail.com

Telephone: [0800 011 3466](tel:08000113466) (calls are free from mobiles and landlines).

If you've seen a scam advert online

You should [report an online scam advert](#) to the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA). You might also be able to report an advert when you see it. For example, Google, Facebook and Instagram let you tell them about scam ads. If you've done this, you can still then report them to the ASA.

If the scam involves financial services

If the scam involves cryptocurrency, investments, insurance or pensions, [report it to the Financial Conduct Authority](#). If you think you've been scammed into transferring your pension, contact your pension provider immediately. Then get in touch with [The Pensions Advisory Service](#).

If a scammer is imitating a company or person

Contact the real company or person to let them know their name is being falsely used.

A common imitation scam involves emails, texts or calls that seem to be from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). They might tell you about a tax rebate or ask for your personal information. [Report HMRC scams](#).

Genuine HMRC texts

In the text message they might include a link to GOV.UK information or to HMRC webchat.

HMRC will never ask for personal or financial information when they send text messages, and advise you not to open any links or reply to a text message claiming to be from HMRC that offers you a tax refund in exchange for personal or financial details.

To help fight phishing scams, you should send any suspicious text messages to 60599 (network charges apply) or email: phishing@hmrc.gov.uk then delete them.

Volunteering with us

We're recruiting for volunteers! Here are the current volunteer roles available:

Reception Volunteers: to be the first point of contact for enquiries and messages, either face-to-face or by telephone. Must be able to record enquiries and take messages. We're currently looking for volunteers for Fridays.

Events Volunteers: to assist staff at various community events and activities. Must be comfortable interacting with the general public and promoting DENW services and projects. Various times and locations to be arranged.

If you are interested in volunteering, and haven't been in touch already, get in touch with Dean and he'll get an application form to you. You can read all the volunteer role information online: <https://disability-equality.org.uk/volunteer>

Email: dean@disability-equality.org.uk

Text: 07841 017472

Telephone: 01772 558863 (option 2)

Community Hub Ideas/Suggestions

As we move, we would love to hear any ideas or suggestions you have for our current and future service offerings. In particular, we are currently investigating for all of our service area if there is anything you would want from a community centre, and, if there is anything you think others need from a community centre.

Text: 07709 710195

Email: hello@disability-equality.org.uk

Are you struggling?

Are you struggling physically, mentally or financially? We hold:

- Face to face, telephone, email or video advice sessions available Monday to Friday 9am - 4pm, email hello@disability-equality.org.uk to book a slot;
- Friendship Fridays every week where you can get together with other people to have a chat and a brew;
- Direct payment advice from LILS;
- Food parcels.

During these tough times, food parcels are available for those that are experiencing hardship and are disabled or are parents of disabled children. For further information, contact Des.

Telephone: 01772 558863 (option 4)

Text: 07709 710195

Email: hello@disability-equality.org.uk

Friendship Friday

Friendship Fridays are continuing to be held (until at least the end of April) at Central Methodist Church, Lune Street, Preston, PR1 2NL from 1pm-3pm on Fridays – there is no session on the 29th of March or the 5th of April.

We will confirm via the membership and social media where these sessions will be held from the end of April.

Email: safetyfirst@disability-equality.org.uk

Text: 07841 017472

Telephone: 01772 558863 (option 2)

Peer Support

What is the Lancashire Peer Support Network?

The Peer Support Network (PSN) was set up in March 2022, to encourage more people to consider direct payments to pay for their care and support needs, and to provide ongoing support for direct payments users, carers and family members, and employers of personal assistants (PAs).

There is a vast wealth of direct payments and employment knowledge throughout Lancashire, and we wanted to connect people with experts with experience, to give them the confidence to take up direct payments themselves, as the process can seem extremely complicated and time-consuming at first, and many people decide to stay with commissioned services, or to receive no support at all.

Peer Support is an important part of supporting people through their direct payments journey, and we believe more people will choose this option, if they speak to other people who successfully use direct payments to employ their own staff.

How do I get support?

We have a friendly online peer support group. Peer support enables people to draw on their own experiences and offers great opportunities to meet with other people who have or want to find out more about direct payments. It's a great way of meeting other direct payment employers, sharing ideas and supporting each other. It is an opportunity to ask questions, offer advice, and to talk to professionals, who we have invited to attend future peer support meetings.

We can arrange for a peer support volunteer to speak privately with someone who would like more advice and support before they approach social services.

We holding online get-togethers using Zoom every couple of months, and we are hoping to arrange face-to-face meetings at the DENW office in Preston on Wednesdays. The next online meeting is on the 17th April and then 19th June - get in touch using the details below to receive the joining link.

I'd like to get involved. Where do I start?

Peer Support is available from 11am-2pm every Wednesday, on 01772 558863 (option 1).

Alternatively, you can email lils@disability-equality.org.uk with the subject header "PEER SUPPORT REQUEST"

Disability Equality Services

Lancashire Independent Service (LILS):

LILS offers Direct Payment information, advice & payroll support to local people who are in receipt of a Direct Payment from Lancashire County Council.

- *Monday to Friday: 9am - 5pm*
- **Telephone:** 01772 558863 (option 1)
- **Email:** lils@disability-equality.org.uk
- **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/LancashireIndependentLivingService>

Safety First:

The project supports disabled people from Preston, Chorley and South Ribble to maintain their safety at home, in the community and in their personal relationships.

- *Monday to Friday: 9am - 4pm*
- **Telephone:** 01772 558863 (option 2)
- **Text:** 07841 017472
- **Email:** safetyfirst@disability-equality.org.uk

Supported Banking:

If you've had a Social Care Assessment, or are in receipt of Direct Payments or Personal Budgets from a Local Authority or the NHS, and you're: struggling with the paperwork, worried about dealing with staff payroll, timesheets, etc. then our experienced and dedicated Supported Banking team can help.

- *Monday to Friday: 9am - 4pm*
- **Telephone:** 01772 558863 (option 3)
- **Email:** supportedbanking@disability-equality.org.uk

General Enquiries:

If you need general / benefits advice or support with renewing them, we can help. Get in touch to book an appointment.

- *Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday: 9.30am - 4:00pm*
- **Telephone:** 01772 558863 (option 4)
- **Text:** 07709 710195
- **Email:** hello@disability-equality.org.uk
- **Facebook Page:** www.facebook.com/DisabilityNW
- **Facebook Group:** www.facebook.com/groups/94427530295
- **Twitter/X:** www.twitter.com/disabilitynw

Dates for your diaries - all FREE!

When not stated below, we will promote each event separately with exact locations and venue details nearer the time via our membership and on social media.

Please contact hello@disability-equality.org.uk for further information.

DATE	EVENT	TIME
Thu 28 th March	<p>Free Springtime Walks</p> <p>We are hosting a series of accessible walks in the Preston Area, based in and around local parks. The first two of these walks will be based in Avenham and Miller Parks, following a circular route that begins and ends at the Pavillion Café on Avenham Park, Preston.</p> <p>To register your attendance in-advance, please email matthew@disability-equality.org.uk or call 01772 558863.</p>	2pm – 4pm
Thu 4 th April		<p><i>Meet at The Pavillion Café just before 2pm</i></p>
<p>Tue 9th April</p> <p>The Foxton Centre, Units 10 & 12 Oakham Court Preston PR1 3XP</p>	<p>Online Reporting</p> <p>How to safely report abuse online using your own devices – bring your own laptop / tablet / smartphone and we'll walk you through it. Light refreshments will be provided.</p> <p>Booking Required: safetyfirst@disability-equality.org.uk TEL: 01772 558863 (opt 2) SMS: 07841 017472</p>	1pm – 3pm
FRIENDSHIP FRIDAYS		
Drop in for a chat with good company, a free hot drink and a bite to eat every Friday.		
<p>April 2024: 12th, 19th, 26th</p>	<p>The sessions have temporarily moved to: Central Methodist Church, Lune Street, Preston, PR1 2NL</p>	1pm – 3pm
<p>May 2024: 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st</p>	<p>We will confirm via the membership and social media where these sessions will be held.</p>	
<p>June 2024: 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th</p>		

Keep an eye on our socials for up-to-date event information:

Facebook: facebook.com/DisabilityNW

X/Twitter: twitter.com/DisabilityNW