

**DISABILITY HUB CONFERENCE - TUESDAY 18 MAY 2010  
MARGATE MEDIA CENTRE**

**Disability and Community Engagement – Making the Hub Work for You**

MC Lisa-Maria opened the conference with the welcome and introductions. She explained why the Hub is taking place, that it has been 2 years' in the planning and how important it is for TVCSF to make it work for the members present. She then went on to introduce the speakers as follows:

**Andrew Field – TVCSF**

**“Social Services – Into the Future”**

Andrew's talk outlined the need for better and more effective communication in relation to the changes that have recently taken place within Social Services, explaining the need to put forward the views of the common people, the users, carers and families etc.

**Paul Lawes – Thanet District Council**

**“Taking the Hub Online”**

Paul's talk introduced the online services available and how to access them. He enforced the importance of the power of communication and the planned additional service being proposed by TVCSF – an interactive media based facility for future hubs.

**Jacqui Ward – Thanet Works/TDC**

**“Engaging the Voluntary Sector in Apprenticeships”**

Jacqui outlined the apprenticeship packages being offered by Thanet Works which are available to voluntary sector organisations.

**Janet Bolton – Thanet Volunteer Bureau**

**“Thanet Volunteer Bureau and Social Inclusion”**

Janet's presentation focused on the benefits that can be achieved by disabled people becoming involved in voluntary work, explaining that the Bureau wants to make volunteering inclusive to people with disabilities.

**Andrew Field – Thanet Disability Forum**

**“Disability in the Community and Social Equality”**

Andrew returned to the podium on behalf of TDF in his role as a member of the governing committee. His final talk focused on his experiences as a disabled person and the need for social equality.

An updates session followed with the following members giving updates on their organisations and services etc.

Kay Byatt (TVCSF – funding opportunities), Jon Weller (VAWK), Sheree Bell (Kent and Medway Partnership Trust), Gemma Leigh (Shelter), Joel Roszmann (Kent Children's Fund Network) and Cllr Iris Johnston (asking for feedback on the disabled shower at Thanet Gateway).

The Disability Hub Conference was concluded with Lisa-Maria thanking everyone while questionnaires and evaluation forms were completed. A networking lunch followed.

Feedback has been exceptionally positive. The Disability Hub Planning Group has since been formed to work on the next Hub Conference, due to take place later this year.

A more detailed version of this report is available from Kay Byatt.

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