



LINK-UP

SPRING 2002

LINK-UP is published Quarterly and distributed free of charge to members and professionals who work with them

AREA ADVISERS FACE REDUNDANCY

National ASBAH is facing hard times financially and has announced that several Advisers will have to be made redundant. The redundancies include one part-time Adviser in the area formed by Wales, Central and Southwest England. Three-and-a-half full-time equivalent staff elsewhere are also under threat, unless ASBAH can raise £100,000

Executive Director Andrew Russell said "ASBAH is determined to go on providing services, information and research and to make sure that they are there in the future for all who need them. Whilst our ability to respond to service-users' requests for help and support will be affected, ASBAH will still offer information and advice where it is needed. We will continue to offer a team of professional Advisers and the Regional and National offices for you to contact."



Peter Bennett
Area Adviser, North East Wales

SAVE OUR ADVISERS NORTH WALES ASBAH TO THE RESCUE

Andrew Russell, Executive Director of ASBAH, has written to all Local Associations asking if they are able to offer financial help. North Wales ASBAH's Chairman, Arthur Todd said "I am sure that I speak on behalf of all members in North Wales in applauding the work of our Advisers, Jill Bartlett and Peter Bennett. I am pleased that the Trustees of North Wales ASBAH have pledged £2,000 per annum for the next three years, in order to try to protect them. Together with a generous pledge from South Wales ASBAH, we hope this will prevent any redundancy in Wales.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

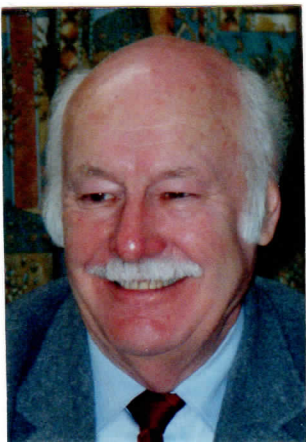
When asked to make suggestions about how members could assist in supporting the provision of Area Advisers, Arthur Todd said "All income is important to us and to those of you who already support the Association, I would like to say how much it is appreciated and to stress how essential your support is in maintaining services in North Wales. We have committed £2,000 per annum for the next three years towards the costs of Peter and Jill. We now have to increase our income and this means reviewing our fundraising activities. I know that we can rely on our members play their part. There are some fundraising events already set up for this summer which **need your help** to maximise their effectiveness. If anyone is willing to consider doing a sponsored event or has a fundraising idea, we want to hear from you. This is an unsettling time, but we believe we can solve the financial challenge if we work together for the important aims we all share." Details of activities needing support are on page Two.



Jill Bartlett
Area Adviser, North West Wales

SAVE OUR ADVISERS

NORTH Wales ASBAH's Chairman, Arthur Todd is urging all members to help with fundraising activities this summer.



He said "Store Collections are taking place on Saturdays during the summer and need just **ONE HOUR** of your time. Please pledge an hour by contacting Carol Buxton at the office **01492 860140** Email **nwasbah@zoom.co.uk** or write to the address on the back page of this newsletter. All collecting

points are under cover and are accessible for wheelchair users. Out-of-pocket expenses may be claimed."

The stores concerned are:

Asda (Llandudno) 13th July

Tesco (Llandudno Junction)

8th June and 10th August

Tesco (Bangor)

22nd June and 14th September

Sainsbury's (Wrexham) 6th July



100 CLUB TO RESCUE

OUR annual income from the **100 Club** is £912. We need to treble this figure to reach our target of £2,400. Half the money subscribed is returned in cash prizes, so more subscribers means **MORE prizemoney**, as well as being a **BIG BOOST** for our funds. It's so easy. An application form is enclosed. You don't have to be a member to join, so **please ask a friend or neighbour**. The odds are **MUCH** better than the National Lottery and prizes are sent by post monthly.

BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN RISE

DISABLED Child Premium will rise to £35.50 a week from April and by another £5 above inflation from April 2003.

Credits for disabled children under 16 in **Disabled Person's Tax Credit** and **Working Families' Tax Credit** will also go up the same amount.

Children's Tax Credit is available to households with a child under 16 at the beginning of the tax year and where the income of the highest paid parent is less than £42,000. For incomes of less than £33,395 the maximum of £520 will be available; over this limit the credit decreases by £1 for every £15 of income.

*Details from your local tax office.

SUSIE SUNSHINE WALK

A **SPONSORED** walk along Llandudno Prom will take place on Sunday 30th June, in memory of Susie Conwy.

Organised by her mother, Val, the walk will be from the Pier to the Paddling Pool, starting at 2pm.

Entrants may complete as many 'laps' as they wish until the 4.30pm curfew. The money collected will boost the Association's funds. Fancy dress is encouraged and there will be prizes for the Best Dressed Adult and Best Dressed Child.

Everyone welcome

Contact Val for further information 01492 878225

FINANCE

January - March

Donations	302.00	
Grants	705	
Fundraising	230.82	
Grants to Members (10)		1,195.00

WORLD'S LARGEST MOBILITY EVENT

A **CHANCE** to test-drive adapted cars, 4x4, skid cars and go-karts on the Donington Park Race Circuit will come your way at the Mobility Roadshow later this year.

The Roadshow - with free admission, parking and free buses from Derby station - aims to give anyone with a mobility problem the chance to see what's available in a 'no pressure' environment.

It will be held in Castle Donington from 20-22 June, from 10am daily. On display will be infra-red switching systems; lightweight sports, power and manual wheelchairs; hand controls; hoists; car seats; vehicles; battery chargers; trikes and scooters; walkers; rotating car seats; specialist wheels and tyres; suspension systems; power steps; ramps; seat clamps; wheelchair restraints; floor tracking; hi-tech mirrors; lifts and numerous gizmos and gadgets to make mobility easier.



WELL DONE SHARON

'Letting their hair down' was the aim of Sharon Hall and two of her friends, who organised a Disco at the Memorial Hall, Wrexham in January.

Sharon, one of our members from Wrexham, and fellow students from the Supported Learning Unit at Yale College had a great time and also raised money for Hope House Hospice through a raffle.



Sharon (centre) with friends Karen Lee (left) and Sue Mytton

MANY CONGRATS, ROBERT

Robert Young, a Wrexham member, has several reasons for celebration. He became engaged to Lisa Parry on 28th November and had his 18th birthday in January.

A keen sportsman and long-term Manchester United supporter, Robert recently started to play Wheelchair

Rugby and has been successful in being selected for the national team, the Cardiff Pirates.



His final triumph is being nominated to carry the Queen's Golden Jubilee Baton, as part of the Jubilee celebrations later in the year. Together with thirty-six others, Robert will carry the baton through Wrexham.



SPINA BIFIDA GENE DISCOVERED

A gene that appears to be responsible for spina bifida in mice has recently been reported by Dr Philip Stanier at Imperial College in London and Professor Andrew Copp of University College, London.

All mammals share many genes and, whilst it's too early for the scientists to say whether humans have this same gene in their DNA, it's possible that they do. It is unlikely, however, that this would have any effect on human pregnancies. Even if gene modification or engineering were possible - and science is a long way from being able to remove 'bad' genes - in the case of a spina bifida gene it would probably have to be carried out on sperm and ova in order to ensure that none of them would develop into a defect early in pregnancy.

However, it might allow affected fetuses to be identified within the first few weeks of pregnancy, which would provide parents with information earlier.

Full article page 6

NEW SCHOOL CODE FOR STATEMENTING

ASBAH has been part of a coalition of charities that has helped to bring about crucial changes in a Government Code of Practice that local education authorities follow when issuing Statements for children with special educational needs (SEN)

All education providers, including childminders, day nurseries and schools, must now have regard to the code and produce a written SEN policy. The revised code has a significant impact on the ways in which schools and professionals work in meeting the needs.

Full article p7

FEEDING PROBLEMS IN CHILDREN WITH SPINA BIFIDA AND HYDROCEPHALUS

Report of a study carried out at the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children

Pages 14-15

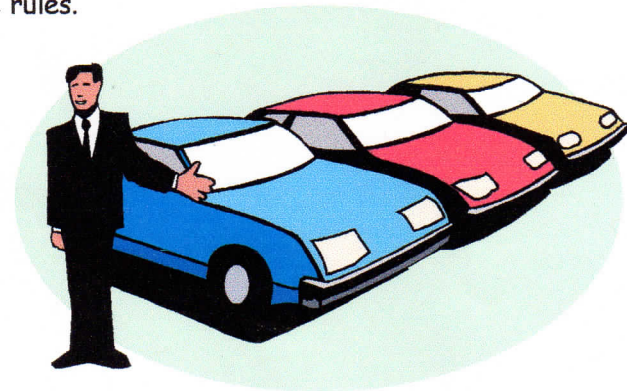
If you do not have a copy of 'Link', your Area Adviser will be able to show you one.

A subscription to 'Link' costs £4.80 per year (6 issues) and is available from:

Link, ASBAH National Centre,
42 Park Road, Peterborough PE1 2UQ

NO VAT ON NEW CARS

LAST April, all permanent wheelchair-users and their families became eligible to pay no VAT when buying a motor vehicle adapted for the disabled person's use. However, HM Customs and Excise has been giving out wrong information on its website and advice line. Here, we clarify the new rules.



Zero-rating now applies to **adapted** vehicles carrying up to 12 persons, so larger families also benefit. The disabled person can be a passenger or the driver and no longer has to travel in a wheelchair, but may sit on any seat.

Buyers must fill out an 'eligibility declaration form' for the vehicle and/or adaptations and servicing. These forms are available from vehicle suppliers or HM Customs & Excise or www.customs.gov/forms/notices/info0701.htm Repair and maintenance of an adapted vehicle, which qualified for VAT relief when purchased, are also zero-rated.

If a wheelchair-user buys a vehicle and then has it adapted, there is no VAT relief on the purchase of the vehicle, only on the supply of the adaptation.

Occasional wheelchair-users are NOT entitled to VAT relief on cars.

100 CLUB WINNERS

January-March

- 1st: D. McHugh, P. Bennett,
C. Wood
2nd: J. Prophet, S. Hopley,
J. Manuel
3rd: E. Osborne, P. Wood,
A. Pollard

