



# My Barnsley Too Forum Event Report 20 November 2014



Report drafted by Amanda Heenan, December 2014



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## Introduction

The latest My Barnsley Too event was held at Barnsley Town Hall on Thursday, 20 November 2014, from 10:30 – 1pm.

The purpose of the event was to bring Forum members together in an accessible and inclusive environment and provide information and opportunities to share their views. It also provided service the opportunity to promote their services to members and ask members for their views.

The event had three themes:

- Access to Services
- Welfare Reform
- Disability Hate Crime

This report will provide an overview of the presentations and discussions and of members' feedback about the event.

See Appendix 1 for the event programme.

## Planning and event organisation

A number of meetings were held which included My Barnsley Too Delegates, 360 Engagement and Barnsley Council to plan the event.

Speakers were engaged by 360 Engagement and Barnsley Council.

My Barnsley Too Delegates were supported to prepare their presentations by 360 Engagement.

Invitations were sent out widely, including through the weekly briefing and targeting marketing to agencies like Groundwork, Cloverleaf (Self Advocacy Service), Dial Barnsley, HealthWatch Barnsley, Mencap, Berneslai Homes, South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Barnsley College and other public sector services.

The event was also supported by volunteers from Barnsley Together who helped with registration, helping people find their workshops and with catering.



## Access to Services

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### Disabled Go

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Anna Taylor from Disabled Go gave an overview of their online access guide, which includes many venues in Barnsley. The guide enables disabled people to plan via a detailed access guide including photo's and measurements. You can find out more by visiting [www.disabledgo.com](http://www.disabledgo.com).

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### Mystery Shoppers (GroundWork)

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Mick Birkinshaw from Groundwork spoke about the Mystery Shopper service and the venues they had visited. Mick gave information about how people can join the Mystery Shopper service and what support they will receive. If you would like more information, please contact: [mick.birkinshaw@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:mick.birkinshaw@groundwork.org.uk).

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### Town Centre and Library Development

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Sarah McHale, the Town Centre Major Projects Officer spoke about the plans to redevelop the Town Centre and the work they had done to get the views of residents, particularly those with disabilities. A walkabout event was held at the HMV pop up store in the Town Centre on 29 September 2014, for My Barnsley Too members and other disabled people to see first hand what the plans were and walk through the areas that would be affected, giving their views. Sarah's presentation included the feedback that they'd had from residents and how they have incorporated that into plans. A copy of Sarah's presentation can be found here ([click here](#)).

Kathryn Green also spoke about the new library development and how people could get involved. A Barnsley Together delegate currently represents the Equality Forums, but more input from disabled people was needed. Discussions are taking place to explore having a mystery shopper as part of the reference group.

## Welfare Reform

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### Disability benefits changes - Dial Barnsley

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Sarah Moore, Disability Benefits Appeals Manager at DIAL Barnsley gave a detailed presentation about changes to disability benefits, including changes from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to Personal Independence Payments (PIP); and Employment Support Allowance (ESA).



You can get further support about appealing disability benefits decisions here:

<http://www.dialbarnsley.org.uk/whatwedo/appeal/> or ring the Appeals Team 01226 240273.

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## Impact of Welfare Reform - Delegates report back

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Pat Durie, Carol Robb and Brian Whitaker represent My Barnsley Too on the Impact of Welfare Reform. Pat, Carol and Brian fed back about the work that has been done by the Forum and its partners to gather a wide range of evidence, including national research, local data and case studies which show the deep and devastating impact of welfare reform on disabled people. The multiple changes, not just financial changes in the form of benefits, but also changes to levels of support due to local authority cuts are hitting disabled people hard. The report also shows that not enough accessible employability support is available so people feel trapped and often that there is no way out. The report makes a number of recommendations to both Barnsley Council and other statutory and third sector organisations.

The Delegates have presented the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the Anti Poverty Board. As a result, an elected member, Councillor Ralph Sixsmith has agreed to be the disability champion and showed his support by attending the Forum event and opening it with a few words to show his support and understanding of the issues and barriers faced by disabled people.

## Disability Hate Crime

Jamie Cash and Brian Whitaker represent My Barnsley Too on disability hate crime. They both sit on the Community Challenge Board, which looks at how effective hate crime and harassment reduction processes are and examines the outcomes of cases. The Board has only just been set up, with the second meeting to take place in January. Brian and Jamie will keep the Forum up to date with progress. Both Brian and Jamie attended a Hate Crime Conference held in Sheffield by South Yorkshire Police. The event was also attended by a number of Delegates from the other Equality Forums.

Jamie and Amanda worked together to draft a speech and this was read by Amanda on Jamie's behalf. A transcript of this moving and powerful speech can be found here ([click here](#)).

## Workshop Groups

Workshop discussions focused on:

### 1. Mystery Shopper Service

- The sustainability of the Mystery Shopper Service was discussed. It was suggested that:



- M&S would be a good place to start when looking at funding options – DisabledGo was developed from M&S funding
- Big, national stores such as Wilkinson's have community funding and community champions
  - Links should be made with Shared Lives/Travel Training
  - Link mystery shopping feedback to Safe Places, DisabledGo, Rainbow Tick, etc
  - Link made to dementia groups

## 2. Better Barnsley Development & Library development

This discussion focused mainly on the Library. However it was requested that as part of the consultation on the redevelopment of the Town Center could we arrange another Town Center walkabout in the New Year.

The information displayed in the Better Barnsley shop on Cheapside will be updated from the end of January.

To find out more about library development, please contact [KathrynGreen@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:KathrynGreen@barnsley.gov.uk).

## 3. Benefits changes discussion

People discussed individual queries regarding benefits changes. Further information can be found here <http://advicebarnsley.org.uk/advice-type/benefits/>, <http://www.dialbarnsley.org.uk/whatwedo/appeal/>

# Accessibility

Participants were asked to note any accessibility requirements on registration. This included requests for transport – many thanks to Barnsley Council to providing the Social Service bus for this purpose. Adjustments were made for visual impairments and hearing impairments were accommodated by ensuring the hearing loop was working and that all speakers used a microphone.

Accessibility is a priority for us, so if you have any feedback about how to make our events more accessible, please email [info@36oengagement.co.uk](mailto:info@36oengagement.co.uk), with the subject 'Accessibility'.

# Who attended and what they thought

A total of 63 people attended the event, this included [xxx] representing partners, event organisers and volunteers.



[xx] were existing My Barnsley Too members, with [xx] signing up to be members on the day. We are also delighted that seven people registered an interest in becoming a My Barnsley Too delegate.

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## Stallholders

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The following organisations had stalls at the event:

- HealthWatch Barnsley
- Berneslai Homes
- South Yorkshire Police
- Barnsley Council, Family and Involvement Service
- Barnsley Hospital Foundation NHS Trust

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## Evaluation Feedback

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18 people completed evaluation forms, here's what they thought:

- In their overall impression of the event, 17% thought it was 'Good', the remaining 83% thought it was 'Excellent'
- In terms of the relevance and usefulness of the information provided at the event, again 7% thought it was 'Good', the remaining 83% thought it was 'Excellent'
- The most useful parts of the event were:
  - Discussion opportunities
  - Input of range of information and policy developments, good to know we have a champion in Cllr Sixsmith, providing a way in to decision making
  - The Town Centre access workshop
  - The presentations, discussions and the opportunity to network
  - *"Very informal it was good as a carer that gave me information so that I can support people within my job"*
  - *"all of it, good way to update people of things that effect them"*
  - The benefits provided was very useful
  - Presentations from *"DIAL, mystery shopper, disability Go, Town center redevelopment"*
  - Hearing from the My Barnsley Too Delegates and the progress made
  - *"The workshop contents, discussion on real time were the most useful"*



- Are the Forum Priorities still useful / relevant to you?

The table below shows the percentage of people that thought the themes were still relevant and useful, and additional areas to prioritise.

Theme	Yes	No
Access to Services	100%	0%
Welfare Reform	83%	17%
Disability Hate Crime	95%	5%
IT Access	83%	17%
Additional areas to prioritise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transport</li> <li>- Transport, links to total area, practical support for reading, maintaining health , wellbeing objective</li> <li>- More IT access for older people</li> </ul>	

- Areas for development:

- Direct quote: *"Not really sure if today we representative-but is there a fair representation for young people with disabilities or of parents/carers?. I'm presuming the forum must have links with other groups that represent children young people and families. It might be powerful if all groups become together on some issues to share the strengths of feeling."*  
We try to make links as widely as possible and have invited groups like the Parents and Carers Fourm and schools like Horizon. However, we are always looking to broaden our networks, so will take this use this feedback to ensure that we have stronger representation in this area. Having said that, we were delighted to have around 20 young people from Barnsley College attend who attended the event.
- Would like ongoing reports on the difference / impact the Forum is making
- *"Keeping people informed through Barnsley both with disabilities represented eg. Blind, physical+ mental health"*
- *"Invite our local MP"*



- *"It would have been better if the workshops were staggered so that attendees could have gave to them all."*

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## Lessons Learnt and Next Steps

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1. Future events to cover one or two areas / themes , providing more chance for discussion and the opportunity for participants to attend all available workshop groups
2. Continue to build links with other Forums outside the Equality Forums. Maximise links within existing Council and other Forums
3. Wider sharing of work done by My Barnsley Too to engage a wider range of disabled people in Barnsley.
4. Future weekly briefings to continue to report back to My Barnsley Too members about progress made and the impact of the Forum
5. A new priority area needs to be set around Accessible Transport. We already have two Delegates interested in representing the Forum in this area
6. The next Delegate meeting will take place on 13 January to follow up on these issues.

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## Acknowledgements

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This felt like a very uplifting event, even though some of the topics were personally challenging for people. Everybody helped to create a safe and accessible environment. Particular thanks go to:

- Councillor Ralph Sixsmith who has agreed to champion disability and My Barnsley Too within Cabinet, Ward Alliances etc.
- My Barnsley Too Delegates who presented and are very active throughout the year: Jamie Cash, Pat Durie, Carol Robb and Brian Whitaker
- Other speakers: Anna Taylor (DisabledGo), Mick Birkinshaw (GroundWork), Sarah Moore (Dial Barnsley), Sarah McHale & Kathryn Green (Barnsley Council), Julian Horsler (BMBC)
- Other workshop facilitators: Jayne Wise (Barnsley Council), Janet Scholey (South Yorkshire Police)
- Barnsley Together volunteers: Davoud Moghadarry, Aghileh Hattami
- The team at 360 Engagement
- Our commissioners at Barnsley Council who challenge and support us in equal measure.



Appendix 1



# MyBarnsleyToo

## Forum Event Agenda

20 November 2014 at Barnsley Town Hall from 10:30 to 1pm (registration from 10:15)

10:15	Registration and refreshments	
10:30	Welcome	Amanda Heenan, 360 Engagement
10:35	Disabled Go – online accessibility service	Anna Taylor from Disabled Go
10:45	Mystery Shopper Service	Mick Birkenshaw, Groundwork
10:55	Better Barnsley (town centre development)	Sarah McHale, BMBC
11:05	Update on the latest news regarding Personal Independence Payments (PIP), ESA, etc	Sarah Moore, Dial Barnsley
11:15	Workshop discussions:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mystery Shopper Service</li> <li>• Better Barnsley Developmen &amp; Library development</li> <li>• Benefits changes discussion</li> </ul>	
11:40	Break and refreshments	
12:00	Feedback on progress against hate crime and harassment	Julian Horsler & Jamie Cash
12:10	Impact of austerity on disabled people – report back on progress	Pat Durie, Carol Robb & Brian Whitaker.
12:20	Becoming active and representing My Barnsley Too as a delegate	
12:30	Local Council budget cuts	Julian Horsler
12:45	Summary & next steps	Amanda Heenan
13:00	Close	