

ANNUAL REPORT CHAMPION FOR THE DISABLED

Councillor Mel Guilding

This year has been another busy and interesting year as Co-Champion for the Disabled.

I have regularly attended the Bay Dementia Hub at both its venues, The Trimpell Club in Morecambe and at Lancaster Library. Both have been very well attended by users and service providers. The Hub is looking forward to being able to use The Banqueting Suite at Lancaster Town Hall for the venue in Lancaster whilst the Morecambe venue will continue to be at The Trimpell Club.

Since July 2018 I have attended The First Tuesday Hub held in Bolton-le-Sands. This is similar to the Bay Dementia Hub but supporting the rural communities. Again well attended by users and service providers. At the Hubs there is always a speaker which is very interesting and informative.

I have supported many people on a one to one basis who are disabled and needed extra help. These ranged from helping with Blue Badges, P.I.P. (Personal Independence Payment) and as a support at an appeals hearing.

I attended Armed Forces Day in Carnforth both as Ward Councillor and as Champion for the Disabled.

I also attended a Health Mela again this was in Carnforth and I was there as Champion for the Disabled and Ward Councillor.

I completed a 4 week course in "Dignity with Dementia" which has given me a much better awareness of the complex needs of those suffering from dementia and also the needs of their families.

I regularly attend The Lancaster and Morecambe Older Peoples Forum and this year we have held two afternoon tea parties for older people many of whom are disabled. The first was held in Morecambe and the Lancaster venue was at the newly refurbished Fire and Ambulance station. The Fire Brigade handed out "goody bags" to everyone who attended which included a thermos mug, a torch and a fleece blanket.

In September I attended the Defying Dementia Day that was held at Lancaster University; again this was a really informative day with scientific lectures about the causes and research that the university are doing and also talks by Dianne Smith who is the Matron of the Dementia wards at Royal Lancaster Infirmary. These were on how to support those suffering from dementia.

I was one of the first people to go into the new Defying Dementia Charity Shop on its opening day. This shop is on Church Street in Lancaster and well worth a visit.

All in all it has again been a very busy year and I hope that the next council will be able to support many of these activities. Disability affects all ages from birth to old age. Some are visible but many are not.