

Brent LINK Annual Report Summary

Report for Brent Council’s Health Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting January 2013

Brent LINK

Brent Local Involvement Network (LINK) is an independent network made up of individuals, community groups, voluntary sector organisations and local businesses. We work together to improve local health and adult social care services in Brent.

We do this by:

- *Finding out what people think of their local health and social care services;*
- *Giving people a chance to suggest ideas to care professionals about improving services;*
- *Looking into specific issues of concern to the community;*
- *Making recommendations to the people who plan and run services;*
- *Asking for information about services;*
- *Carrying out visits, when necessary, to see if services are working well;*
- *Referring issues to Brent Council’s Health Partnership’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee if it seems that action is not being taken.*

We are steered by a Management Committee, made up of 10 individuals and voluntary sector organisations. We also have five Action Groups as well as two sub-groups which report to the committee. Action Groups: (Adult Social Care, Primary Care, Mental Health, Hospitals and Public Health & Community Services). Sub-Groups: (Community Engagement and Inclusion Sub-Group and Healthwatch Sub-Group)

Management Committee:

The Brent LINK Management Committee is made up of elected and Co-opted members. One of the key roles of the Management Committee is to hold the strategic overview of Brent LINK activities, in the context of current legislation, national and local guidelines in relation to health and social care services. In this context the Management Committee has to try to hold the balance in the focus of activities that the LINK undertakes over the year. There is a tension between the demand from local and national organisations that want LINK involvement and ensuring that issues or concerns that come from the community are taken up. Brent LINK had an election in 2012. The process and election took place between July and September 2012 with the first meeting of the newly elected Management Committee took place on 27th September 2012. The election report can be found on the Brent LINK website www.brent-link.org.

Action Groups:

The success of Brent LINK has resulted from active members giving great deal of their time, personal expertise and most of all their commitment to the principles and work of the LINK.

Members have taken active roles in developing and representing the LINK. Their commitment in terms of time, skills and sharing their creativity has enabled the LINK to be effective in its role of influencing, monitoring and most importantly improving the quality of health and social care services in the borough. It was agreed that the Lead of each Action Group would be a Management Committee member.

Details of the Management Committee, Action Groups, the leads and their work are in the annual report.

Host:

Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) are facilitated and supported by Host Organisations. Hestia Housing and Support (Hestia) took responsibility as the permanent Host organisation for Brent LINK since 1st December 2008. Hestia is a registered charity, established in 1970. Hestia's vision is **Empowering People, Changing Lives** and their mission is to provide high quality services in partnership with users and local communities.

As at the time of this report, the LINK in Brent is being supported by three staff members (Olasumbo Ajala – LINK Host Coordinator, Carol Sealy – LINK Host Administrator and Nadine Yao – Administrative Officer) and dedicated volunteers such as Janet Johnson and Melissa Henry. Hestia has also created a Head of Community Engagement post to provide a strategic overview of all community engagement projects run by Hestia, including the Brent LINK.

Representation / Representatives:

Brent LINK has a selection of trained members who are qualified to undertake “enter and view” visits. Details of all trained “enter and view” authorised representatives can be found in our annual report.

The LINK also has members involved in a number of relevant decision making bodies such as Brent Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board, Brent Shadow Clinical Commissioning Group and Brent CCG Equality Diversity and Engagement Sub-committee (EDEN Committee). Details of members involved in a number of relevant decision making bodies can be found in our annual report.

Demonstrating Impact through Action

The following section highlights the issues Brent LINK identified through community engagement activity and what was done in response.

a) Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

There was an opportunity to comment on the draft Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) developed by Brent Council and NHS Brent which will shape direction of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

Brent LINK organised a consultation event on 20th March 2012 regarding the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) developed by Brent Council and NHS Brent which will shape direction of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy. The event ascertained comments from the community and feedback was given to Brent Council and NHS Brent in May 2012.

b) Quality of Care Home services

Brent LINK members in the Adult Social Care Action Group were concerned at the quality of care being provided for recipients of Domiciliary Care Services and felt a need to ascertain the quality of care home services in Brent.

Miranda Wixon (Lead of the Adult Social Care Action group) met with Alison Elliot, Director of Adult Social Services, in August to discuss proposed survey and to obtain permission for it to be carried out. The survey was also discussed at the Brent provider's forum in September 2012. A survey was carried out so that we could make report on our findings and make recommendations to Brent Council.

c) Involvement and Engagement of Young people

Brent LINK through the Public Health and Community Services Action group recognised the gap in engaging with young people regarding health issues.

The Group got involved in the Olympic Legacy event which took place in September 2012 and are planning to hold an event this year to engage with children and young people.

Brent LINK met with NHS Brent in July 2012 regarding Community Engagement and Children' Health Conference week, two Brent LINK members attend the conference.

d) Health and Well Being Strategy (2012 – 2015) Consultation

Brent LINK members expressed a lack of understanding of the strategy documents and the implications to the local Community.

In October 2012, Dr. Imran Choudhury (NHS Brent) was invited to present the strategy documents at the Brent LINK Public meeting and give people the opportunity to ask questions and gain better understanding of the strategy documents. This meeting presented a two-way communication channel that aided better understanding.

e) Re-Commissioning of services (Cardiology and Ophthalmology Services)

Brent LINK was concerned that services were being re-commissioned into the community without adequate patient and public involvement and engagement.

Brent LINK Public and Community Health Services Action Group took an active part in the re-commissioning of Out-Patient Cardiology and Ophthalmology services in Brent. The Action Group has two representatives on the re-commissioning group who have assessed the tender bids and made recommendation. The group plans on being involved in the planning and implementation of the services.

f) Dementia

Brent LINK members in the Mental Health Action Group were concerned that Dementia is on the increase in Brent and that this trend would continue. There was also a concern that there was a need to create more awareness on Dementia.

Brent LINK through the Mental Health Action Group organised a Dementia workshop on 10th October 2012 to mark the World Mental Health Day. This was an opportunity to generate greater awareness and to educate local communities on dementia and the support that is available to them. It was also an opportunity to find out about the early warning signs, prevention and treatment, voice their concerns, have their questions answered and review proposed changes that may have an effect on Dementia Services.

g) “Enter & View” Visits

Brent LINK members raised concerns on the need to have on-going training for more members to undertake “enter and view” visits. There was also a need to follow up on “enter and view” visits that had been made in 2011/2012

During 2012/13, following the four “enter and view” visits undertaken in 2011/ 2012, Brent LINK had two “enter and view” follow-up visits to Willesden Centre for Health & Care and the elderly wards at Northwick Park Hospital. The results of these visits have been used to improve patient care and patient experience.

The report of the visit to Willesden Centre for Health & Care was presented to the Health Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2012.

h) Shaping a Healthier Future Consultation (SaHF)

The public were largely concerned about the proposed changes and the lack of understanding of what the proposals meant for the people of Brent

Through the year LINK representatives sat on the board of SaHF and took the concerns being raised by the public to the board. In September 2012, Brent LINK held a public meeting as detailed in earlier sections of the Annual report.

This enabled a better understanding of the proposals and the opportunity to feed into the proposals

i) Central North West London (CNWL) NHS

The Brent LINK Mental Health Action Group identified a need to discuss a number of issues relating to Mental Health service provision, delivery and strategies with the Central North West London (CNWL) NHS.

Brent LINK had an initial meeting with Clare Murdoch, Chief Executive CNWL on 28th May 2012 regarding the issues highlighted. There have also been regular meetings with the trust as agreed by the LINK and the Trust.

j) Shadow Brent Shadow Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Constitution

Brent LINK is represented on the Shadow Brent CCG and are working with the CCG to agree a number of issues. Brent LINK raised concerns on Shadow CCG Authorisation. The Commissioning Board clarified issues raised by Brent LINK. LINK involvement in the CCG has meant significant engagement of the public.

k) Brent LINK Community Survey¹

Brent LINK’s Healthwatch Steering Group, with the support of its host, Hestia agreed in August 2012 to undertake a community health survey of residents and organisations in Brent.

Brent LINK sees this exercise as a legacy project for the forthcoming Healthwatch. In so doing the LINK is committed to support an evidence based insight into the perceptions of people about health services locally, their awareness of the current initiatives and priorities in the health and social care sector, the concerns and hopes for health provision locally and priorities for the Healthwatch going forward.

¹ Report available on our website www.brent-link.org

Comprehensive details of the survey and report was submitted for the November 2012 Health Partnership Overview and Scrutiny meeting.

I) Annual General Meeting 2012

Brent LINK held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 26th November 2012, this was well attended. The AGM was an opportunity for the LINK members to hear from the Brent Clinical Commissioning Group on the proposed plan for Brent as the NHS as it has been known undergoes its last few changes.

Looking Ahead

2012 - 2013 is the last year of Brent LINK as it has been known over the last four years. It has been a very busy, challenging and successful period for Brent LINK.

With limited resources, we have been undertaking transition activity as well as continuing our function as the community voice of health and adult social care issues in the borough.

The funding for the LINK in Brent ends at the end of March 2013 and we are committed to continue to represent the voice of the people till the end of March 2013. There will be a new consumer champion organisation which will take up the role as well as additional roles and responsibilities. This Organisation will be Healthwatch Brent. The London Borough of Brent as at the time of this compilation is in the process of procuring the Organisation that will be Healthwatch Brent.

We are working towards leaving a legacy document for the new Healthwatch Organisation as well as having all existing Brent LINK members become active members of the local Healthwatch when the service starts. We are also committed to make available our expertise and knowledge in ensuring Brent has a good Healthwatch organisation.

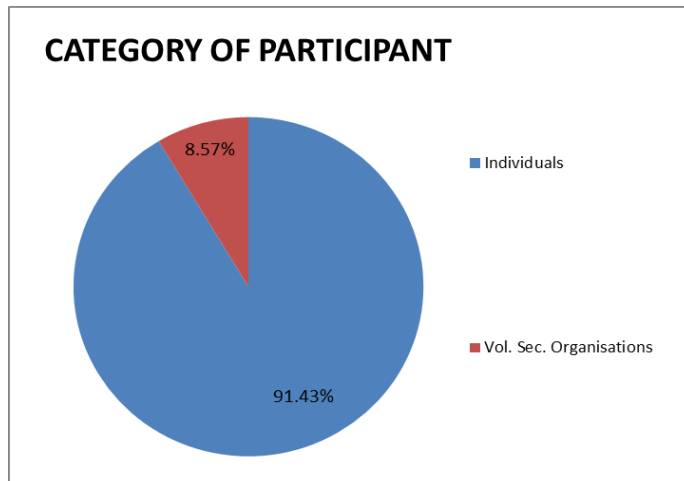
We believe the Healthwatch Organisation will continue the good work that has been done by Brent LINK so far and continue to represent the voice of the people of Brent.

Brent LINK will keep its network informed about these developments as they arise.

Sign up of Participants

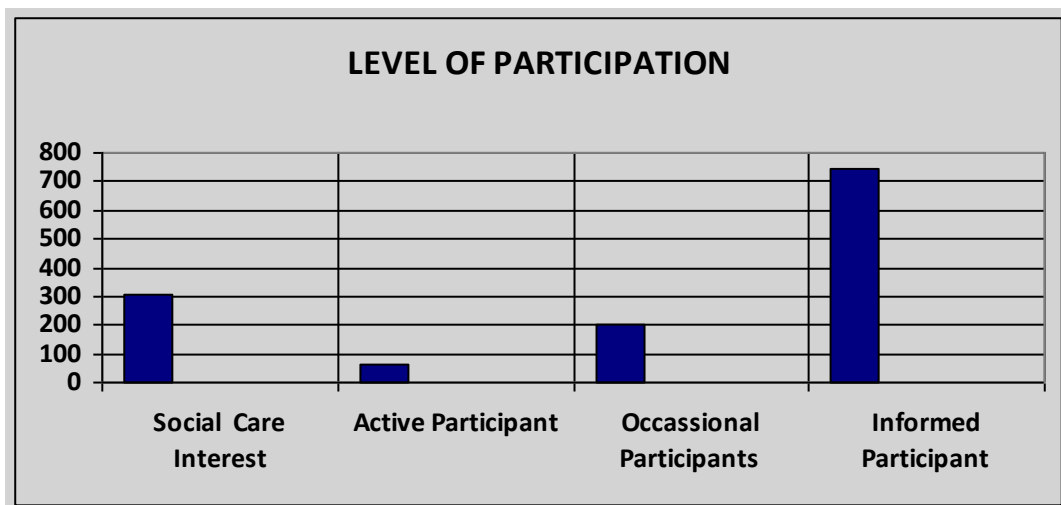
By the end of the reported year, we had **770** signed up participants to Brent LINK and reached out to many more people through our outreach work and public events. We have also met with statutory and voluntary agencies that have expressed an interest in becoming involved. It was worthy to note that about half of the signed up members to Brent LINK prefer non electronic means of communication such as post or phone.

A **Brent LINK member** is a person or group that makes a commitment to take part on a regular basis in the development and implementation of the roles of the LINK, and to provide information to and collect information from a local community or a specific group within a community.



Brent LINK has Seven Hundred and Sixty Seven (770) participants as at the end December 2012. These are made up of seven hundred and eleven (704) individuals and fifty seven (66) organisations / groups. The Organisational or group participants constitute 8.57% of the participants while Individuals are 91.43%.

Brent LINK has seven hundred and forty seven (740) Informed participants, two hundred and five (205) Occasional Participants and sixty five (65) Active participants. Some participants are represented in all three categories (Informed, Active and Occasional).



Circulation Of Brent LINK Annual Reports

Brent LINK 2011 – 2012 Annual report has been circulated to all Brent LINK members by email and post depending on their preferred mode of communication.

This year (2012 – 2013) the LINK is expected to produce and submit two sets of annual reports. The Brent LINK 2012 – 2013 Interim Annual Report will be published on our website www.brent-link.org. All signed up Brent LINK members will receive an email or letter informing them of the location of the Annual Report and it will only be posted out on request. A final report / legacy document will be produced for March 2013.

A copy of the all Brent LINK Annual Reports will be sent to:

Secretary of State for Health
Care Quality Commission
London Borough of Brent
LB Brent Health Partnership Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Ealing Hospital NHS Trust Integrated Care Organisation
NHS Brent
Central & North West London NHS Foundation Trust
NW London NHS Hospital Trust
Brent Shadow Clinical Commissioning Group

Copies will also be made available via:

Brent LINK Office upon request

Brent LINK Contact Details

(The contact details below are valid till 31st March 2013)



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