

Sensory Conference “Busting Barriers”

Bringing communities and organisations together to talk about sensory issues
raise awareness and break down barriers

Speaker Profiles



Shaun Basham District Manager - Guide Dogs for the Blind Association

Responsible for client services in Essex and East London Boroughs. Aged 50, Shaun joined Guide Dogs in 1995 at the Wokingham Training centre. Shaun is a qualified Rehabilitation Worker and has experience working with Local Authorities and voluntary organisations within the South East delivering services to Blind and Partially Sighted people.



Annette Bodsworth MBE – Co-Chair, The Deafblind Planning Group

I am the current service user Co-Chair of the Deafblind Planning Group. I Co-Chaired this group from 1998-2008. In 2007 I was awarded an MBE for services to Deafblind people in Essex. I was re-elected Co-Chair in 2010.

I have always enjoyed voluntary work since my teens in various roles, such as teaching ballet to children with special needs, setting up a non profit community playgroup in Newham, East London.

I am a guide dog owner, a mum to three adult children and grandmother to three. I have lived in Essex for twenty four years.



Liz Chidgey - Deputy Executive Director, Adults, Health and Community Wellbeing, Essex County Council

Liz started her career as a Home Care Manager in Southend in 1983. She qualified as a Social Worker in 1986 and worked as a Senior Practitioner in Children's Services. She later changed focus into training and development, and then moved to a wider Human Resources and Organisational Development remit.

She held a corporate Senior Manager role in Development prior to joining Adult Social Care in November 2005.

Liz currently works as Deputy Executive Director for Adults, Health and Community Wellbeing with a key responsibility for the commissioning and delivery of services, and Safeguarding. She is leading the transformation agenda in Adult Social Care with a focus on continuing the personalisation of services and responding to current demand and financial pressures. She also manages Essex's Adult Community Learning service.



Maureen Croydon D.E.A.F and Hard of Hearing Planning Group

I worked in an Essex County Council Residential Home for older people in Harlow for 20 years. I have also been employed by Sense, an association for Deafblind people as a Senior Worker in a group home for Deafblind people with Learning Difficulties, plus I worked for Mencap and the Royal Association for the Deaf (RAD) in various positions. I have done lots of voluntary work for deaf and hard of hearing people in many groups. Starting as a youth leader with the BOAHOH (British Association Hard of Hearing) way back in my teens. I was a member of the Essex Deaf Council and a BDA (British Deaf Association) delegate and Chairperson for the Harlow Deaf Club. I Joined the Deaf Planning Group, now called the Deaf Essex Access Forum in 2005 and the Hard of Hearing Planning Group in 2008 and was involved with the Equal Lives Strategy for Physical and Sensory Impairment. I am now involved with Mental Health for Deaf People Group and the Participation Network Forum (PNF) and Options for Independent Living Transport (OIL) Group. I lost my hearing through meningitis and rely solely on lip-reading .



Dr. Gerlis, General Practitioner and joint Chair of West Essex Commissioning Consortium

Full time GP partner in Harlow since 1986.
Lead GP for Practice when fund-holding.
Chair of Harlow Practice Based Commissioning Group
Currently joint Chair of West Essex Commissioning Consortium



Jill King OBE

I am a totally blind person aged 71, and have been a guide dog owner for nearly 40 years. I have worked voluntarily since 1968, improving the environment for blind and partially sighted people.

I was a founder member of the Southend Access Committee, the first in the UK, in 1970, and a founder member of the Department of Transport's Disabled Persons' Advisory Committee, which I was a member of for 20 years, forming the Bus and Coach Working Group, which introduced low-floor entrances, lower bell-pushes and colour contrasted handrails.

I initiated tactile paving at pedestrian crossings as a compromise between the needs of people who used wheelchairs and for blind people who needed to locate a safe pedestrian crossing.

I have worked since 1971 to improve access for guide dogs, and for both this and the tactile paving I was awarded the MBE in 1983.

Since 1997 I have chaired the European Blind Union's Commission on Mobility and Transport, and have spoken at many European conferences. Most recently I have attended meetings in France with Nissan and Renault, to ensure that audible indication is installed into all silent electric vehicles.

I have been an active member of the National Federation of the Blind, and a member of the Royal National Institute of Blind People, and am currently a trustee of Disability Essex and Ricability.

In July 2010, my autobiography, entitled "Just Jill" was published by Apex Publishing, and is available in all formats.

I have most recently been awarded the OBE for services to blind and partially sighted people, where my guide dog was allowed to accompany me to receive my award from HRH Princess Anne.



Madeleine Cassidy – Support4Sight and member of the Vision Impaired Planning Group

Madeleine, is the Director of Support 4 Sight, the local sight loss charity in West Essex, which supported over 3000 people last year with sight loss problems. She is also the Non-Executive Marketing Director of Visionary, the UK national association of sight loss societies, and is presently the chair of "Essex Vision", the campaigning strategic group for local sight loss in Essex. Madeleine graduated with a Social Science degree from University College Dublin and also obtained the Chartered Institute of Marketing's Diploma in Marketing. Prior to joining Support 4 Sight, her background includes marketing management; having worked for the food-manufacturing group, Tulip International, for eight years.



Phil Lee - Co Chair, The Vision Impaired Planning Group

Phil Lee has vision impairment and is a guide dog owner and his dog's name is Nan. He is a Disability Equality Trainer, and specialising in vision awareness plus experience of pan disability.

Phil is the Chairman for Fair Access 2 Colchester, and Co-Chair to the Vision Impaired Planning Group which is a user group working with Essex County Council. Phil has also worked for Ask Vera (part of Ling Trust) as Training Co-ordinator since September 2008.

Throughout his career Phil has experienced discrimination because of his disability, he has certainly had a journey questioning about his own abilities and rebuilding his confidence this has led him to help others by creating training programmes around Disability Equality, Visual Awareness, Single Equality Act and Accessible Information for disabled and non disabled.

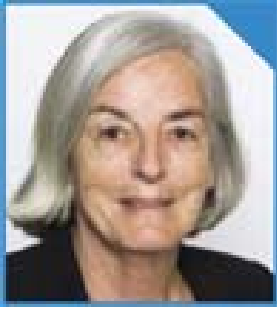
Phil has worked for the NHS and has been the disability officer for the local branch of Unison and a member of the Equality & Diversity Committee for the Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust.

He has worked for Essex County Council where he was a member of the Disabled Employee's Network. He has worked for the RNIB as a senior project assistant and part of this role was being the REACT Co-ordinator where he dealt with enquiries from people with disabilities about problems they needed information about. Phil started taking an interest in disability issues when he worked for BT and joined the Equality sub-committee in the CPSA union. He also was Chairman for the CPSA when he worked for HM Customs and Excise.



John Mackinnon, Senior Operational Manager for ECC Sensory Services

John has worked in social care for 34 years, and in Essex for 23 of these. He is currently the Commissioning and Delivery Director for West Essex (Adults, Health and Community Wellbeing, Essex County Council), and County-wide lead on physical and sensory impairment, and for HIV and AIDS. Before joining Essex County Council, John worked at a number of special boarding schools for the visually impaired in London. John is passionate about the needs of sensorially challenged individuals and previously ran the Sensory team in Essex.



Councillor Ann Frances Naylor

Ann Naylor has been Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Community Wellbeing of Essex County Council, since 2010. She represents Brentwood Rural Division. Previously she was involved in Children with Special Needs and Health for Children. She was a member of HOSC.

In her new role she is responsible for a high-spending directorate faced by demographic pressures and financial strictures. Her role covers adult social services, mainly to the elderly and those with disabilities, and health in the widest way from service delivery to health inequalities, with pressures due to GP commissioning coming to the fore.

She was a Consultant Anaesthetist at Basildon Hospital where she worked for 29 years. She ended up as one of the first “Doctors in Management” and became a Clinical Director for all anaesthesia in the Trust, including obstetric anaesthesia, ITU, acute and chronic pain services together with management of all operating theatres and their staff, including Day Surgery.



Ann Nutt DEP.Pg (cert) - member of the Physical Impairment Planning Group

Ann lives in Harlow and has been involved with social care in Essex for many years as a service user. Ann has completed a Post Graduate as a Disability Equality Practitioner at Anglia Ruskin and the RNIB Diploma in Multiple Disabilities. A strong advocate for service user/carer/citizen involvement she was active in helping to set up the six planning groups (Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Visual, Deafblind, Physical Impairment and Older People)

Currently, Ann sits on the Social Work Education Participation a national body looking at user/carer involvement in Social Work Education. A trustee/director of Shaping our Lives a national User Network that is an independent user-controlled organisation, think tank and network. Within Essex Ann is vice-chair and a founder member of Essex Coalition of Disabled People, Co-Chair Equal Lives Strategy Group, Co-Chair of the Participation Network Forum and part of the following groups; Adult Safeguarding Board; Pre Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board; Health watch and user involvement; GP Commissioning; Essex and Southend Links and the Essex Participation Group.



Crystal Rolfe, Senior Audiology Specialist at Action on Hearing Loss in the research, Policy and government relations team.

Action on Hearing Loss is the new name for RNID. We're the charity working for a world where hearing loss doesn't limit or label people, where tinnitus is silenced – and where people value and look after their hearing. Crystal also works 1 day a week at the Royal London Hospital as a clinical audiologist to keep up her clinical skills. Crystal has been working in these two settings for the last 3 years and prior to this has several year's experience working in the NHS in Wales and in improving quality standards and training in the private sector in Portugal.



Sue Rowen and Guide Dog Layla - Guide Dogs for the Blind Association and member of the Vision Impaired Planning Group

Sue, born in Colonial Rhodesia, moved to the UK 3 years ago which is now her permanent home. Diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP) at the age of 19, her sight gradually deteriorated until October 2009 when it disappeared

altogether. Her working career spanned 30 years in the field of Human Resources and Information Technology, followed by direct involvement in the visually impaired sector when she joined Guide Dogs UK in July 2009 as an Information Officer. In South Africa, since her early twenties Sue ran various RP support groups and trained as an HIV/aids peer educator supporting people, friends and family affected by this terminal illness. Her association with Guide Dogs began in 2000 when she acquired her first guide dog, a black Labrador named Scully. As Information Officer her role is to dispel the myths surrounding guide dog ownership and to liaise and form networking partnerships with other organisations to render joined up services to the visually impaired. "I have the best job in the world", says Sue, "it is extremely rewarding to be able to promote a service about which I am so passionate, knowing that anyone who acquires a guide dog will experience life changing independence and mobility".



Anita Sartain – Co-Chair, The Hard of Hearing Planning Group

Anita has been a member of the Essex County Council Hard of Hearing Planning Group since it was formed 13 years ago. She is currently performing the role of Co-chair, a role she has held for just under a year.

Anita has also been actively involved with Hearing Help Essex which is a Chelmsford based charity that helps hard of hearing people in Mid Essex. Initially she was a volunteer but in 1999 she became the Director of Hearing Help Essex, a role she held until 2007. She remains a volunteer and is also a trustee of the charity.

Anita is a hearing aid wearer with a severe hearing loss as the result of contracting meningitis at the age of 11 months. She is a competent lip reader, has certificates in Stage 1 and Stage 2 British Sign Language and Level 1

Deaf/Blind Awareness. She has also presented Deaf Awareness Training to various professional organisations and societies.



Tony Sheill – ECC Operational Service Manager for West Essex

Tony has been an Operational Service Manager for Essex County Council since September 2008. Prior to that, he worked for a London Borough and for the Royal Association for the Deaf (RAD). Tony is a qualified social worker, and has the countywide responsibility for all Sensory Services, as well as the Learning Disability and Physical Impairment services in West Essex.

Tony has been Deaf since birth and communicates using British Sign Language. He is a trustee and Vice-Chair for RAD, and takes an active role in all the Sensory Impairment Planning Groups. He was instrumental in writing the report called 'The Deafinitive Gap' which looked at gaps in services, and is working with all Planning Groups to develop strategies to improve the lives of Essex people who have Sensory needs.



Richard Stone

Richard has painted portraits of the Royal Family for nearly three decades. At the age of 22 he became Britain's youngest royal portrait artist since Sir Thomas Lawrence painted Queen Charlotte in 1790 at the age of 21. Although he has had little formal art training, Richard Stone's success is a direct result of a natural talent and a strong determination to succeed in the career he has pursued since childhood.

Born in 1951 the son of a Colchester postman, Mr Stone began cultivating his talent following an accident at the age of four that left him with a fractured skull and permanent deafness in his right ear. The young artist began sketching in a notebook and later painted to communicate with his family and teachers, demonstrating a keen sense of perspective and mixing colours.

From the age of eight, he was actively encouraged by his next door neighbour, Frederick Heron. An amateur Essex painter, Heron taught Richard the basics of art. Then when he was fourteen, Richard went to the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, where he saw a portrait by Sir Gerald Kelly. With the directness that has subsequently characterised his career, he wrote to Sir Gerald, saying how much he had admired the portrait and asking if he could possibly help and advise him. The result was prompt. Sir Gerald could offer him all the reasons against being a portrait painter, but if he would like to call and see him, and bring his work, he was welcome. Richard took along what work he had done, listened to Sir Gerald's reasons, and would not be dissuaded. It was the start of a friendship that was to last until Sir Gerald's death in 1972.

Sir Gerald had been an ideal tutor. With his help and advice Richard set about becoming a portrait painter. The achievements are formidable. Following Sir Gerald's advice, he started knocking on doors in an attempt to find work, and he was successful. One of his earliest subjects was Sir Arthur Bliss, the

Master of the Queen's Musick. As well as Sir Adrian Boult, another contact Richard made was at Clarence House, Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother's London residence. When he was put through to the Comptroller of the Household, Lord Adam Gordon, he made his mark with a memorable phrase, "Don't ring off, I could be the latter-day Rembrandt." This singular lack of modesty paid off, and Lord Adam listened to his reasons for wanting to paint the Queen Mother. After accepting a commission to produce a likeness of Lady Adam Gordon, Richard was invited to paint the Queen Mother's portrait. The finished work was greeted with tremendous critical acclaim, but many were sceptical that the young artist could sustain a successful career.



Joanna Wanmer - Community Engagement Co-ordinator for the Physical and Sensory Impairment Planning Groups at Essex County Council

I have been a Community Engagement Co-ordinator since July 2009 and my role is to support, develop and promote the Physical and Sensory Impairment Planning Groups. I have worked as a business administrator in an Adult Social Care Senior Management Team and as a PA Consultant to the Disability Sports Development Officer both at Essex County Council. In addition I also work part time as a Co-ordinator for Essex Actionnaires, an activities club for visually impaired children and young people in Essex run by Action for Blind People, which I have been doing now for 6 years.

My parents are profoundly Deaf so I have a good understanding of Deaf Culture and have British Sign Language skills level 1 and 2. I started volunteering when I was 15 when during the school summer holidays I volunteered to work in a respite scheme for children with learning and physical disabilities. I have continued to volunteer, working with disabled adults and children and I set up

and ran a Mother and Toddler Group in my neighbourhood when my children were young. In recent years I have focused my volunteering with CHP Housing Association in Essex and their residents' forum. I have held a number of positions over the last 9 years, including Chair of the Leaseholder Forum, Deputy Chair of the Central Residents' Forum and PR Co-ordinator. Currently I am Deputy Chair and co-founder of both the Disability Action Group and my local residents' association; I am also a resident panel member of the Equality and Diversity Panel.



Celia Watson - Project Manager, UK Vision Strategy, EPIC Project

EPIC (Engagement, Partnership, Information, Communication) brings together health, local authorities and voluntary sectors to plan and implement their local vision strategies. Celia advises and supports local areas to ensure their local plans take into account all aspects of vision, and are specifically focused on local needs.

With qualifications in Management and Communications, Celia's previous experience includes the design and implementation of England wide strategies and programmes for successful cross sector partnership working within the children's, heritage and social housing sectors, working within the voluntary and statutory sectors in a number of roles, including Best Value Inspection, Project and Programme Management.



**David Watson Policy Intern
Policy, Community Planning and Regeneration**

David Watson is 29 and lives in Ipswich. David works in the Policy Team at ECC. Over the past few months David has been working on the developments around Health and Social Care, focussing on HealthWatch.



Rob Wilkes – The Royal Association for Deaf People

Deaf, Rob has worked for RAD for eight and a half year years. Originally from Newport, South Wales, he has a BA (Hons) degree in History, and commenced his legal training having completed Diplomas in Law and Legal Practice. He completed a LLM in Law of Employment Relations with the University of Leicester in 2008. Rob's specialist area of law is employment, but he can also advise on discrimination in housing, goods and services and education. He is also able to draft wills on behalf of clients.

Having qualified as a solicitor in May 2007, Rob handles all complex legal casework in this capacity where required. Rob manages RAD Legal Services, and line manages the Caseworkers and his BSL/English Interpreter.

Rob is a member of the Employment Lawyers Association.

Team website: at www.radlegalservices.org.uk