



Coffee Mornings Jan-Feb 2010

16th March 2010

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A series of coffee mornings throughout County Durham to showcase the work being done by County Durham LINK and provide two-way communication between LINK Management Committee Members and the wider LINK membership.



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Aims & Objectives

1. To provide two way communication between LINK Management Committee Members and the wider LINK membership.
2. To showcase the work done by County Durham LINK since its launch in October 2008.
3. To raise awareness about County Durham LINK.
4. To increase membership of County Durham LINK
5. To discover what areas of health and social care the general public are concerned about.



Method

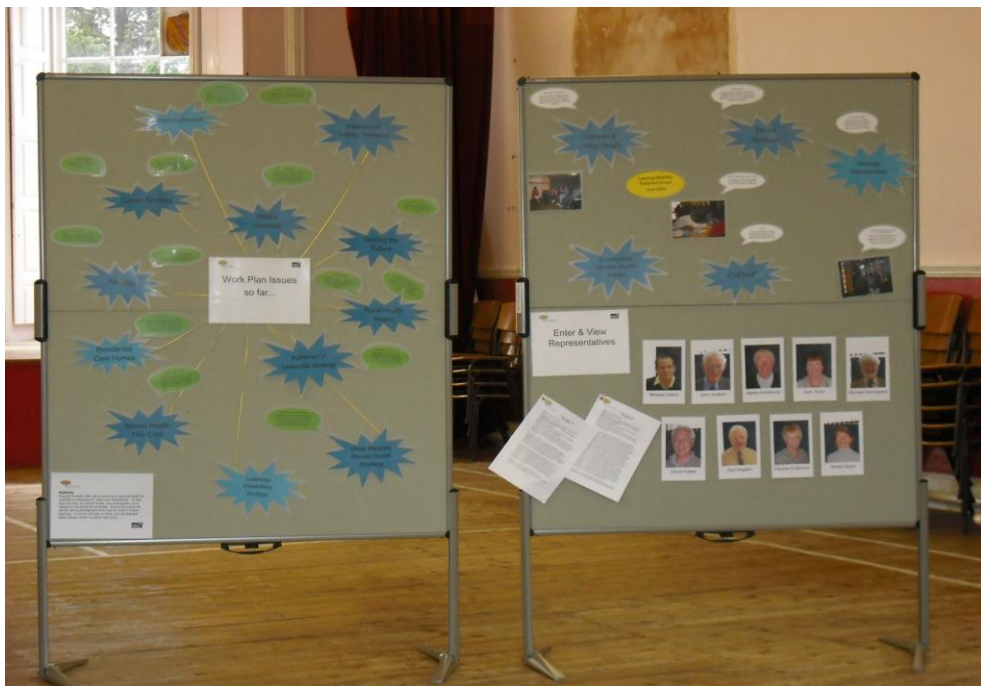
11 coffee mornings were arranged throughout County Durham. A variety of venues were identified to test what would work best. Equally, days of the week and timing of the coffee mornings was varied.

Area	Venue	Date	Info
Teesdale	The Randolph Centre, Evenwood	Thursday 11 th February 2pm - 4.30pm	The centre is very busy with a Surestart nursery and Job Centre Plus area. There is disabled access and baby changing facilities. Toys are available.
Teesdale	Barnard Castle Parish Hall	Saturday 6 th March 10am-2.30pm	The downstairs room is fully accessible. The farmers market runs the first Saturday of each month. There is space to put a large sign outside the hall.
Chester-le-Street	Methodist Church	Tuesday 23 rd February 9am-12noon	The hall is FREE for charities every Tuesday and has a regular client group. A Mother & Toddler group also runs on a Tuesday. The building is fully accessible. There is a market held across the street on a Tuesday.
Wear Valley	St Thomas Church Hall,	Saturday 27 th February	The hall has coffee mornings every Saturday and has a regular client

	Stanhope	10am-2.30pm	group. It is centrally located.
Wear Valley	St Catherine's Community Centre, Crook	Thursday 25 th February 10am-2.30pm	The hall is centrally located and well known in the surrounding area.
Durham	Old Elvet Church Hall	Saturday 23 rd January 10am-2.30pm	The hall is fairly central and the coffee morning will be advertised in the church magazine.
Sedgefield	Newton Aycliffe Library	Tuesday 26 th January 10am-2.30pm	The library is centrally located and near bus stops for those travelling into Newton Aycliffe on public transport. Tuesday is Market day.
Sedgefield	Ferryhill – Methodist Church	Friday 12 th March 9.30am-11.30am	Friday is Market Day. There is an existing coffee morning with space for a table and display and informal networking with those attending.
Derwentside	The Tommy Armstrong Centre, Stanley	Wednesday 3 rd February 10am-2.30pm	The centre has CAB and Shaw Trust sessions on this day and is fairly centrally located.
Derwentside	Glenroyd House, Consett	Tuesday 8 th February 10am-2.30pm	The centre is located on the High street at one end and has a drop in session for the CAB on a Tuesday.

Easington	East Durham Trust, Peterlee	Friday 22 nd January 10am- 12.30pm	East Durham Trust regularly provides updates about the LINK in their newsletter and whilst the venue isn't centrally located it is hoped advertising by both LINK and the Trust will bring in people.
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Visual displays were used to showcase the work done by County Durham LINK and introduce the Management Committee and Enter & View Representatives.



Members of the public who attended the coffee mornings were invited to suggest future health and social care issues that County Durham LINK could look at.

Suggestions made are:

Closure of Residential Care Homes	LINK should look at Transport. Health = Transport
Momentum	Alternative therapies. E.g. Singing
Teenage pregnancy	Community Health services
Eating Disorders	Bullying
Cleanliness of hospitals	Support for Cancer patients and their family/carers

Advertising

Coffee Mornings were advertised in a number of ways including:

- Local CVS's in their E-bulletin and/or Newsletter
- LINK Newsletter
- Posters in local shops and public buildings
- Flyers distributed to members of the public on the day of the coffee mornings
- The Northern Echo website – What's On section and then in Northern Echo group local papers.

Evaluation

Attendance at the coffee mornings is shown below:

Date	Venue	Attendees	New members on the day
22/1/10	East Durham Trust Community House, Peterlee	12	1
23/1/10	Old Elvet Methodist Church Hall, Durham City	10	2
26/1/10	Newton Aycliffe Library	18	2
4/2/10	Tommy Armstrong Centre, Stanley	8	0
9/2/10	Glenroyd House, Consett	3	0
11/2/10	The Randolph Centre, Evenwood	10	1
23/2/10	Chester-le-Street Methodist Church Hall	73	0
25/2/10	St Catherine's Community Centre, Crook	16	4
27/2/10	St Thomas' Church Hall, Stanhope	19	2
6/3/10	Barnard Castle Parish Hall	9	0
12/3/10	Ferryhill Methodist Church Hall	41	1

In total 219 people attended the coffee mornings and 13 people joined County Durham LINK at these events.

When referring back to the aims of these events the primary objective was to open up communication between the LINK management committee and the wider membership. This was an issue that was brought up at the LINK AGM in October 2009, however, of the 219

people who attended the coffee mornings the vast majority were not members of the LINK. The format may have been responsible for this. The coffee mornings were very informal and people were encouraged to 'drop in' at a time that suited them. Although the members of the public who attended had no complaints about the format, perhaps LINK members may have preferred something more formal.

The next 2 aims looked at engaging with the general public and raising awareness of the LINK and what it does. This objective was certainly met at some of the coffee mornings but not all. Chester-le-Street and Ferryhill were particularly successful at bringing in new people to talk about the LINK. These events were existing coffee mornings with an established clientele.

Other coffee mornings were very poorly attended and whilst for some this was probably down to location, e.g. Durham; Stanley and Consett were most definitely hampered by the adverse wintery weather conditions. Throughout the coffee mornings we asked those who attended what they thought of the chosen venue and if they had any suggestions for the future. As a result we do have some alternatives to look at for future local events.

13 new members were recruited at the events and there have been some additional members return forms in the weeks following the event. It is difficult to know whether these were a direct result of the coffee mornings or other general awareness raising activities. The new application form should help monitor this in the future as it has a section asking where the individual or organisation heard about the LINK from.

The final objective looked at future issues and those who attended felt very strongly about a variety of issues detailed above. There were however, trends. Momentum was the primary concern in Easington and a long healthy discussion took place about this. Transport came up in the Dales coffee mornings, time and time again. And work relating to

young people was mentioned at many of the coffee mornings, be that to do with pregnancy, bullying, eating disorders.



Recommendations

- To have separate events for members and the general public with their own distinct aims and objectives. Events for members could provide updates and /or appointments with their Management Committee reps. Events aimed at the general public should focus on raising the LINKs profile, showcasing the work done so far and increasing membership.
- The format should be adapted to meet the target audience. A more formal event might work better for existing LINK members with the informal coffee mornings reserved for general awareness raising.

- The most successful venues were those where a coffee morning already took place. LINK should use existing coffee mornings, meetings and events as a way of raising awareness. This will also reduce costs.
- New issues suggested at the coffee mornings to be included in the next Work Plan Scoring process.