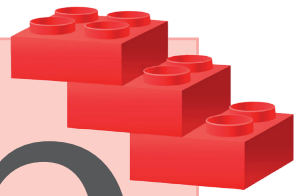


# link-up

North West



**July 2014 Disabled People's User-Led Organisation Newsletter**

Welcome to the first issue of the North West regional Link Up newsletter. This is going to be a regional newsletter to let you know what other DPULO's are doing within the North West and keep everyone informed of what's going on.



**Sophia Erskine DPULO Young Ambassador**

Hi I am Sophia! I am 25 years old and am a qualified Drama Teacher. I completed my Post-graduate Diploma in 2012,

I have been visiting DPULOs across the North West from the likes of DaDaFest, who inspire, develop & celebrate talent in disability and Deaf Arts. To Merseyside Partners in Policymaking, who deliver training and information days on key issues such as PIP.

It has been good to see DPULOs supporting one another to promote the benefits of new and diverse approaches to supporting young people.

I look forward to seeing more DPULO's work, discovering what exciting and thought provoking opportunities are available to young, disabled people.



**Ellie Bamber DPULO Young Ambassador**

I am Ellie, one of the young ambassadors. I am 18 and going to start University next year, studying Occupational Therapy.

I am a disability swimmer and a swimming teacher at my local club where I teach both disabled and able bodied children to swim. I have set up a boccia club, to provide more opportunities for younger disabled children to socialise as both a social activity and a chance for them to be part of a team.

I work with Stockport NHS foundation trust as youth ambassador, encouraging more young people to get involved with the local NHS and put their opinions and ideas forward.

We both look forward to working with you, and hearing and sharing all your news in the near future.

## Have your say...

Please share what challenges you face as a DPULO. How have you overcome them? Is there a question you need advice on, or just let us know what you would like to see in the future issues, email [odi.businessperformance@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:odi.businessperformance@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)



**Above:** Louise Hunt, left, at **ecd p**

### Future Focus at **ecd p**

Working in partnership with DPULO Ambassador Louise Hunt to shape a better tomorrow for young disabled people in Essex

One of our greatest values at **ecd p** is making the voices of disabled people heard and ensuring that decisions concerning disability are not made without the input of disabled people.

Supported by Paralympic tennis player and DPULO Ambassador Louise Hunt, **ecd p** ran a series of focus groups in January and February 2014 to discover the experiences and opinions of young disabled people. We wanted to forge a

network of people that could offer support to each other from their shared lived experience. These were the Future Focus groups.

Louise Hunt attended many of the groups and shared her experience and expertise with the focus groups and helped collect valuable insight from attendees.

The Future Focus groups allowed opinions to be collected from key disability groups including physical disabilities, sensory impairments, mental health, and learning disabilities.

William Snagge, Director of Policy and Development at **ecd p** said, 'there was an excellent turn out at all the events delivered and we've had lots of positive conversations. The experiences and opinions that attendees shared have given us real insight into the everyday experiences of young disabled people in Essex. This has enabled us to identify some key issues.'

**ecd p** is now ensuring that Future Focus research helps to shape services available to young people locally for the future. The full Future Focus report is available at [ecd p.org.uk](http://ecd p.org.uk) and participants from the groups met recently for a peer led social evening.

The whole initiative is a great example of how individuals can provide real input into regional and national services and policies - and work together to address local needs and personal aspirations.

### Useful Links

Remember to Link us on Facebook !

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Young-DPULO-Ambassadors/446601028760890?fref=ts>

And follow us on Twitter ! <https://twitter.com/DPULOAmbassador>

**Warrington Disability Partnership** Disability Awareness Day 2014 Sunday, July 13

- Walton Hall Gardens [www.disabilityawarenessday.org.uk](http://www.disabilityawarenessday.org.uk)

Coming Soon: **Young Ambassadors's Community Challenge**

