



**THE OAKLEA TRUST**  
*Towards independence...*

**Pat Allen**

I have been involved with Oaklea Trust since inception and was the representative of Westmorland Mencap Society on the first Management Board in 1990. My aim at this time was to provide alternative residential accommodation to that offered by Social Services or the Health Authority and to give families an opportunity to be involved in the planning and delivery of care.

My background in the Voluntary Sector has been as a representative of Westmorland Mencap and this has led to serving on, and chairing, many committees and groups dealing with the provision of new services or lobbying for improvements in existing services. My knowledge has been gained from personal circumstances and from many years as an observer.

I have been a member of Westmorland Mencap for 40 years and during that time have been involved in raising funds to build and to continue to support Sandgate Hydrotherapy Pool in Kendal. Using my awareness as a parent of a child with severe learning disabilities I was instrumental in developing and fund-raising a Pre School Development service for babies and young children with learning disabilities. This service was run by Westmorland Mencap for three years and was continued by Cumbria County Council Education Department.

As a member and past Chairman of Westmorland Mencap I have worked to fund opportunities and to manage the Leisure Clubs for adults and children with learning disabilities. Currently Westmorland Mencap has a contract with Oaklea Trust to provide this service.

My interests have always been in the field of learning disabilities and it has been very rewarding to be a part of the development of Oaklea Trust from one house in 1990 to the organization that is now providing a variety of services to a much wider section of the population across Northern England.