

# Loud & Proud

"A Voice for disabled people"

April 2000 - Volume 1 - Issue 4

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## HULL CITY HALL ACCESS

Approximately, four years ago, I attended a meeting with the fire service, council representatives and management of Hull City Hall to look at their access policy.

Basically, they were putting wheelchair users at the back of the hall for any events where people might stand.

This meant that a wheelchair user's view was quite restricted, despite paying the same price as everyone else.

I was assured at that meeting that things would be done to change the situation, but there has still been no improvement.

It was reported in the Hull Daily Mail before Christmas that Jimmy Nail (Spender) had been performing

there and invited questions from the audience. Some wheelchair users in attendance asked him why they were at the back with a poor view and charged the same price.

Jimmy's response was to get off the stage and go and discuss it with them in more detail.

Let's hope this support from someone famous may persuade Hull City Council to realise that they need to do something to ensure this doesn't continue.

If you don't visit the City Hall because of this, let your Councillor know. Each time we don't attend an event, it means the venue is losing money.

Surely, our custom is as important as anyone else's?

## INVITE FROM MP

Choices and Rights are going up in the world! Just before Christmas, I received an invitation from Margaret Hodge MBE MP to attend a reception in London celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act.

Unfortunately, due to illness, I wasn't able to attend. The Act was one of the first pieces of legislation to give disabled people some rights. However, I would have been much keener to attend if Ms Hodge had announced a comprehensive civil rights bill for disabled people. So far, she hasn't shown any commitment to this or even to the views of disabled people today.

Her best plan so far has been "See the Person, Not The Disability Campaign" which has been about as successful as the Millennium Wheel!

## A BIG THANK YOU!

I would like to thank everyone who sent me cards, presents, telephoned or visited me in hospital during my recent enforced stay in Castle Hill Hospital.

Being in hospital over Christmas and the New Year is not particularly nice, but all the support from everyone made it a little more bearable.

People may be pleased (or not!) to know that I am now back to my old self and looking forward to helping Choices and Rights get the Centre for Independent Living up and running.

Keep an eye on Loud & Proud where we'll bring you the latest news and updates on the Centre for Independent Living and Direct Payments.

**Mark Baggley**  
Chair - Choices & Rights

# Loud & Proud

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We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this issue of Loud & Proud.

Editor: **Mark Baggley**

# NEW INNOVATIVE APPROACH

Theresa Redmond of Barnardos Yorkshire has approached DAN about her organisation's innovative project to promote the adoption and/or fostering of disabled children by disabled parents.

Barnardo's New Families is an adoption and fostering agency in Yorkshire. We find families for older children, Black, Asian and dual-heritage children and sibling groups in Local Authority care.

Running alongside this work, we have set up an Outreach Project that aims to find families specifically for disabled children.

This year alone approximately 40% of the children referred to us had a disability of some kind, ranging from a learning difficulty, to a physical or sensory impairment, to a serious illness.

The 'Be My Parent' adoption and fostering magazine reports that around 30% of the children featured in it have a disability. The sizes of these numbers speak for themselves.

Barnardo's works within the Social Model of disability with over 8,000 disabled children and a central theme of the work is inclusion.

One concern of the outreach project is that disabled children grow up to be disabled adults in a disabling world. We believe that finding children safe, loving and permanent families is a way to ensure that these children, like all children, have the best start in life possible, or at least a second chance, which is often the case.

The aims of the outreach project are to raise awareness of the issues, dispel negative myths and stereotypes that surround disability generally and ultimately find stable and permanent families for children.

We want people, especially potential adopters and fosterers, to see disabled children as children first and foremost, and to remember that caring for any child who has been in the care system will present them with many challenges and many rewards.

We encourage enquiries and applications from people from all walks of life, backgrounds, abilities and cultures.

We value diversity and experience. We do not discriminate on grounds of gender, age, disability, ethnic origin or sexual orientation.

Applicants can be single, married or living with their partner, employed or unemployed, own or rent their home, and they may or may not

have children.

What is essential is commitment, energy, patience, good support systems and they must be ready for a challenge!!

If anyone is interested in finding out more Theresa Redmond will be happy to speak with any interested groups or individuals about the issues involved in the adoption and fostering process.

Please contact her for an informal chat or meeting at:

Barnardo's New Families,  
43 Briggate  
ShIPLEY  
Bradford  
BD17 7BP

Tel: 01274 532852

Fax: 01274 530998

**Barnardo's works within the Social Model of disability with over 8,000 disabled children and a central theme is inclusion.**

# Birthdays and Bouncers!

I went out in Hull town centre to celebrate birthday, in my powered chair.

I met my mates at my local pub (Crown), and we had a few beers there before jumping into a taxi. The taxis near the Crown pub are so accessible nowadays as they're nearly all the black cabs and mini buses and they all have ramps (no more relying on 'Dial-a-Ride's patronising "disabled" service.)

Our first pub was Yates, it was packed but we didn't have any problem getting in the pub. The pub has a disabled toilet and the ordinary toilets are accessible as well, pretty good eh?

I think there is still a need for a disabled toilet even if the ordinary toilets are accessible, because supposing I went out with a woman, she won't be able to go in the men's and I'm not going in the women's (well maybe he he!) so there is a reason for a disabled toilet ... anyway after Yates we went in to Maces.



Access to Maces was fine, only a small step to climb up and a friendly bouncer helped me. As soon as we got in I needed a pee again, and guess what? no disabled toilet and the ordinary toilets are upstairs.

The friendly bouncer said I could "go in the back yard" and opened

the gates. After doing my business, my mate Neil emptied my pee in to the mop bucket for cleaning the floors (tut tut), and we were thinking about putting some in this motorbike tank, but we didn't!

The final pub was Flares. The bouncer basically said in a rude manner "you can't come in, in your wheelchair 'cos its too packed." He then tried dragging me out of the doorway! By now I was really mad - he thought he was big enough (well, he was 6ft) and he could drag me outside - WRONG!

I put on my wheelchair turbo boost and dragged the bouncer into middle of the pub (I was on two wheels at one point.) I stopped in the middle of the pub and he was still trying to drag me out, but he just couldn't move me.

A woman said to the bouncer "what's the problem" and then my mates started on him saying "what about equal rights". After a while of arguing the bouncer said to my mates "its your fault if he runs anyone over".

I think its alright going into packed places in a wheelchair if you have someone in front of you clearing the way, for example on the way out of Flares I didn't run over anyone's feet. Do bouncers refuse to admit fat people?

## Part 2 ... Flaring up Again!

A few weeks later we were out on the town and decided to go into Flares again, this time we didn't have any problems getting in.

The bouncer said to go into the corner near the DJ's stand, so we did. I saw the bouncer who tried dragging me out and told my mate to give him my story (the first part of this story). The bouncer just

throw it on to the floor!

The DJ picked it up, stopped the music and started to read it out but twisted the story around to made me look like the bad guy. Basically he was saying awful things about me and he even called the Crown pub a dump!

I was furious, everyone was going mad at him, my mates had to push me outside. There were loads of people walking out, even the cops came to see what was going on. The manager came and instantly sacked the DJ, then the DJ came outside and said to me "YOU GOT ME SACKED!!!!", so I said "GOOD!!!!".

After that we went to Cheeky Monkeys without any problems getting in - nice people in Cheeky monkeys. Later on we went to LA's (nightclub) and on the way I got stopped by a cop to see if we were alright and to find out what happened for his report.

The next day we had a meeting with the manager of Flares and she said, "We are very sorry for what happened last night. We've sacked the DJ and you are welcome anytime."

**Karl Dean**

Choices & Rights Member

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# Access what access?

Hello, I'm Duncan and I have volunteered to take responsibility for access issues, including access audits.

I will occasionally need some help with the audits. I will need people who can visit buildings and assess whether or not they are accessible, both in terms of their physical design and layout, and also the attitude of the staff of the buildings.

There are one or two people who have already expressed an interest in helping out, but if there is anyone with a visual or hearing impairment who wants to get involved, please contact me at the Choices & Rights office.

## When 'accessible' doesn't mean Accessible!

It has come to my attention that some restaurateurs and publicans have been describing their premises as accessible when they do not have a fully accessible toilet.

I do not consider a pub, cafe or restaurant to be accessible if it does not have an accessible toilet; for a building to be regarded as accessible all facilities which are accessible by an able-bodied person MUST be accessible to any disabled person.

Things have reached the point of crass stupidity in Matthew Fort's EATING OUT column (Saturday supplement in the Guardian Newspaper). Matthew's assessment of the restaurant ends with either the words 'Wheelchair access, no WC' or 'Wheelchair access and WC'.

What does that mean? Does it

mean that I can take Mark Baggley's wheelchair out for a meal to say a big 'thank you' for cradling his bottom for all these years, but I might have to take a bottle with me to pee into? or, does it mean that most restaurateurs, and perhaps Matthew Fort, think that all wheelchair users have catheter bags? or, perhaps they just think that all disabled people are specially trained, Barbara Woodhouse style, to only go to the toilet when instructed by a nurse or doctor?

I must, however, thank Matthew Fort for introducing me, in his column of 17 July 1999, to a few lines of poetry that adequately sum up my feelings to any restaurateur or publican who thinks that their establishment is accessible even when it has no accessible toilet.

In the words of Charles E Boles (aka Black Bart, stagecoach robber and poet):

"I've laboured long and hard for bread, for honour and for riches, but on my corns too long I've tread, you fine-haired sons of bitches."

## Restricted Growth - Restricted Rights!

I have been acquiring an expanding collection of books and guidelines on a number of access issues, including one on the positioning of cash point machines to make them more accessible.



The Centre for Accessible Environments and the British Banking Association have got together to draw up this document and it's very good, as far as it goes!

You see, they seem to have forgotten about our brothers and sisters of The Restricted Growth Association, some of whom will still not be able to reach to put their cash point cards into the machines!

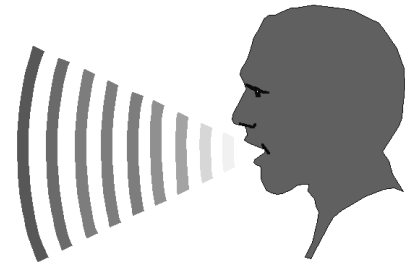
## M.U.G.S.

At our recent training day we had a happy, smiling band that are - Marks Unpaid Gopher Squad (aka the Choices & Rights Volunteers) - learned some new terms and definitions, so I've decided to come up with one of my own:

CHARITY; an organisation which is created as a direct result of a group of people being denied their human and/or civil rights by the country of their birth; usually begins with the aim of campaigning to reclaim the members/clients rights, but may eventually become a large bureaucracy reliant on a continuation of the status quo to guarantee employment for its staff and also freebies/junkets/holidays abroad for its wonderful carin' sharin' Board of Directors/Trustees.



# SoapBox



## Its Brilliant

Dear All,

Hi, I am just letting you know that I got my 'Loud and Proud' and it is brilliant! What an amazing range of information, ideas and contributions. Are you going to be able to keep up the standard?

I am going to the USA soon so will look out for the effects of the Americans with Disabilities Act and perhaps report back about access to services and transport. Perhaps I will come across something more dynamic, you never know. I just thought I must email you all to say its great.

Love and best wishes  
**Dianne Keetch** (email)

## What else can I say?

Dear Editor,

I have just received my very first copy of your newsletter and I must say that it is great, refreshing, informative, well edited - what else can I say? (That's a pint you owe me).

Anyway I found the article by Karl Dean of great interest as I have just been issued with a new big red electric chair.

It goes as far as the corner, about 200 yards, and back before it has to go on charge again for another six hours.

Originally my GP requested an outdoor chair for me, since I could no longer propel my manual one.

I was surprised by the service I got from the wheelchair department who seemed most understanding and was told I'd have to wait about six weeks, not too bad I thought.

I went to West Suffolk Hospital for a fitting and tried an old red one,

but they told me I'd get a brand spanking new one and I went home happy.

When they delivered it I couldn't believe my eyes, it was a really, really old style chair (I reckon they resprayed the one I had for fitting). My GP had said something six weeks earlier about miracles!

Anyway, after reading Karl's article I got on the phone to the wheelchair department to find out what was going on.

They told me 'The manager is not in today' and I got this answer for about two weeks until a lovely sympathetic woman listened to me and told me I could apply for one and she would send me the forms.

I told her my GP had already done that and she offered to put me on a waiting list but it would take a while.

This started in June and guess what? that's right ... I'm still waiting (October 1999).

I've got the bit between my teeth now and I am determined not to let this issue drop. I am going to see it through to the bitter end.

**Bruce Weetman** (letter)

## My Experience at the Guildhall

I had a meeting at the Guildhall, Hull and couldn't manage to walk to the entrance from where I'd parked, so I used my wheelchair.

At the main entrance I came across some very steep steps and a sign saying "disabled entrance this way".

I wheeled my chair all the way around to the back of the building, which was quite a distance. If I had used my stick I wouldn't have been

able to manage. When I got to the disabled entrance I came across a big heavy door that opened towards me. I had to wait for somebody to help me, and I thanked God it wasn't raining.

Once I got inside, I told the attendant about the trouble I'd had in accessing the building and advised him of the Disability Discrimination Act.

He responded by telling me that it didn't apply to the Guildhall because it was a listed building. He then suggested that in future I ring beforehand so something could be arranged. In my opinion this is discrimination.

I then suggested that they fitted electric doors or at least doors that you could push open, to make things easier for people in my position and to comply with the DDA.

I was told this would cost the council too much money. I found this to be a totally unreasonable answer because after all the DDA is law, isn't it? I would also like to know how the council intends to make sure that they and all the people concerned make sure that the DDA is implemented?

If anybody has had a similar experience, I'd love to hear from you!

**John Gilling**

## Do you want to have your say?

Soap Box is the place to do it and its open to everyone. You can send your articles by letter, fax, email or floppy disk (preferred) to the Choices and Rights office and mark it for **Soap Box**. (We reserve the right to edit any submitted articles due to limited column space.)

# Bit of this and that

## “A mixed bag of goodies”

### A USEFUL SIGN WHEN FILLING UP!

A revised 'Code of Practice on Facilities For Disabled Motorists at Filling Stations' is now available. The code sets out guidance on minimum levels of service that must be provided if the International Wheelchair Symbol is to be displayed.

Disabled people may then identify the level of service and provisions that can be expected for disabled drivers. Any restrictions must be indicated with the International Wheelchair Symbol.

Free copies of the Code of Practice are available from: The Secretariat, DPTAC, DETR, Zone 1/11 Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DR, Tel: 0171 890 6100 (with Minicom).

Source: TRIPSCOPE

### REGARD

For any new readers, just a little mention of one of the organisations Choices and Rights is a Member of. **Regard** is the National Organisation of Disabled Gay Men, Lesbians and Bisexuals. They produce a quarterly newsletter, information, and have a help line number on 0207 738 6191. Their address is Regard, Unit 2J, Leroy House, 436 Essex Rd, London N1 3QP

email: regard@dircon.co.uk

### JOHN GILLING? WHO IS HE?

Hi, my name is John Gilling. I started work as a volunteer for Choices & Rights Disability Coalition on 27th October 1999 and have

been asked to give you all a bit of background on myself, so here goes.

I suffered from a stroke on 1st February 1997 which left me with walking and balance difficulty's and I was unable to speak for about 8 months. Although my speech has now come back, I still have trouble with walking and get around with the use of a stick for short journey's and a wheelchair for the longer ones, such as shopping etc.

My stroke hit my family and me quite hard because prior to this I had always prided myself on being a fit and active sportsman. In fact I won a version of the English Lightweight Kick-Boxing title in 1987 and I was a Second-Dan black belt in karate.

After about 18 months of going through a depression, I was introduced to Duet and began a personal development program that helped me to like myself again and to realise that I still had the ability and potential to learn new things and to contribute to society.

In the last 18 months, with the help of Duet and Hull College I have completed 12 courses and gained many new qualifications including counselling, computers, first aid, English, and Health and Safety at Work.

I volunteer at Duet helping people who are going though the same situation as I was after my stroke, and I am also an active member of the group campaigning to get proper stroke services into Hull and East Yorkshire.

I now feel as happy and contented as any other time in my life and am determined to make sure that myself and other disabled people are treated equally and fairly in today's society. That is why I have

joined Choices and Rights.

That's all from me at the moment but I look forward to meeting and speaking to you all in the future. I also intend to contribute to the newsletter on a regular basis so WATCH THIS SPACE!

**John Gilling**

Choice & Rights Volunteer

### DIRECT PAYMENTS NO LONGER A PILOT IN HULL AREA

I'm well into the Direct Payments Scheme and we a respectable number of disabled people expressing their interest in Direct Payments and going through the process to become employers of Personal Assistants.

Hull's Social Services Dept. have decided that the scheme is no longer a pilot - originally targeted for 7 people in the first year.

Now any person interested in using the scheme and who meets the eligibility criteria will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Direct Payments is a real opportunity for greater independence for disabled people in Hull so this is really good news!

If any one would like further information contact me on 789320.

**Liesel Dickinson**

ILS Co-ordinator

### WANT TO WRITE AN ARTICLE FOR LOUD & PROUD?

We welcome articles from anyone and everyone regarding disability issues, your life, your campaigns, trials and triumphs - See page 15 for details!

# Bit of that "A bag of mixed goodies" and this

## DO YOU WANT TO BE MORE INVOLVED?

If you have experience in putting together funding bids, we'd like to hear from you. (Please note, however, we are not looking for people to 'Rattle Tins!').

Choices and Rights focus on the best interests of disabled people, we want to have our voices recognised when the discussion turns to things that affect us. This includes looking at funding opportunities to provide services that assist and empower disabled people.

We find the search for funding opportunities is an ongoing process and, we are looking for members to get involved in the fund raising aspect of Choices and Rights work.

If you have experience and time please get in touch with the office on 01482 788668.

## DAWN TAYLOR

I moved into my bungalow in October 1998 after being in a nursing home for two and half years.

I had a long-term illness that left me with an impairment and in a wheelchair, and my dad gave up the family home for me for which I can't thank him enough.

When I moved into the bungalow I spoke to my next-door neighbour Rita who befriended me and we are now good friends.

Rita had been talking to me about her volunteer work at Choice & Rights and the more she spoke about the coalition the more interested I became.

I asked Rita how I could get involved and she spoke to the Development Worker at Choices & Rights, who gave me a ring and sent

me the information and forms I needed. I had an informal interview and was then invited to a training day with other volunteers.

Mark (the Chair of Choices & Rights), spoke about the coalition and what it stood for. Liesel did a talk on Direct Payments, and Gwen told us about the role of volunteers within Choices & Rights.

I got the chance to meet other volunteers and it was a very informal day. I was looking forward to getting started with my volunteer role at Choices & Rights.

I started doing one morning a week learning the basic office skills. I also learned to put information on the 'tracks' information line database and this prompted me to take up a basic computer course.

Rita has also kindly offered to let me use her computer when I want to so my computer skills are getting better.

Since moving from the nursing home to my bungalow, my independence and confidence has grown. Volunteering has also given me an insight into life, and I now have a social life which I haven't had for a long time.

Changing my lifestyle was very difficult as I have only had my impairment 5 years. I am very proud of myself and so are my family. Rita always tells me to give myself a 'pat on the back'.

The Medics told my father I would not be able to walk again, well I have proved them wrong to a certain degree - I can now take steps with a tripod.

**Dawn Taylor**  
Choice & Rights Volunteer

## LIFE AFTER ARRC

Hi,

I am just writing to let you know about my new life in Wilberforce College, Hull, which I started in summer 1999. I am studying computers and doing Clait spreadsheets and graphs. Anyway, I want to tell you about the access, its very good, they have a lift which goes to all floors and all the people are friendly there. They also have a canteen that is open all day!

Paul Lister (email)

## DAVE & SUE

In the last issue of Loud & Proud we told you about Dave and Sue who had recently been married.

Their local newspaper did an article on their marriage and Dave and Sue have kindly sent us this picture for Loud & Proud:



# Computer Corner

## Television Technology !

When is a television not a television? When it does email, web-surfing, visual-telephony, on-line shopping, banking, programs-on-demand, etc.

The idea is not a new one, its been hanging around various R & D departments for more than a decade, in fact I remember seeing a video-telephone demonstrated on tomorrows world over 13 years ago (has a camera so you can see the other person).

Recent advances in satellite, computer and telecoms technology are now opening the way for us to have a whole host of our services provided through our TV. Imagine being able to run your life by sitting in front of the TV and pressing buttons on your multi-function programmable input device (remote control).

You could order your shopping (delivered to your door), pay your bills and check your bank balances, see your friends and family when talking on the vidi-phone, surf the internet whilst recording your favourite soap, select a program to watch *when* you want to watch it. You could even work from home through your TV - sounds fantastic doesn't it? ... doesn't it?

As a self confessed 'techie' I think the idea in principle is great. The complex marriage of computers, telephones, satellites and audio/visual technology it is an amazing achievement. I remember thinking years ago that it would be great if you could select a film *you* wanted to watch and have it 'piped' directly to *your* TV. The current proposals allow you to do more than that, you can now select any

program you like, whenever you want, to watch whenever you feel like it. You can also 'go back' and watch programs you have missed.

Now although the technological achievement is amazing, it does worry me that the corporations behind these advances appear to want you to do everything sat-down in front of your TV. Nearly everyone in the developed world has a TV and phone in their home, but do we really need to do everything sitting down in front of a TV?

Some people will jump at the chance to have such features 'plugged-in' to their TV, some people will want to be the First to do it and have fun showing off their new 'multi-function-device', but I'm not sure I really want my TV to become my portal to the world or the place I have to go to answer the phone (or rather not if I'm already sat in front of it!).

I like using my computer for computer 'stuff' (lets hope these TV's don't crash as often as my PC does!). I like the way the telephone can be an anonymous device when talking to strangers, i.e.; salespeople. I like to speak to 'humans' now and again when I make enquiries at a shop, bank or business. I like to drive/way around to get things I need or want.

Automation has its advantages and some of the most enabling technology has come about because someone, somewhere has developed an idea into a real-world application, but there is more to life than TV, and although this 'progress' is inevitable, I hope there will still be a few people left who will read Loud & Proud !!!

## WEB TRINKETS

### National Association for Bikers with a Disability

The NABD was set up in April 1991 by a small group of people in Manchester who believed that disabled people should have full access to the independence and enjoyment of motorcycling.  
<http://www.nabd.org.uk/>

### Centre for Accessible Environments

The Centre is committed to the provision of buildings and places which are accessible to all users, including disabled and older people, and to the enhancement of quality in design (*this passage taken from their website*).  
<http://www.cae.org.uk/>

### Disability Access Rights Advice Service

Daras, established under Section 28 of the DDA, provides free, independent and expert advice on the DDA's provisions relating to access to goods, services and other facilities (Part III).  
<http://www.daras.co.uk/>



**Shaun Hague** - "IT Manager & Website/Graphic designer"

**email:** shaun@dtopwebdesign.com



# The other Mrs Dales' Diary



**1st:** When the plants start talking back to me, I think the genetic scientist have gone to far. The police called, Jim crashed his tractor having lost consciousness after using a fungicide. The doctor said it was an acute reaction to the chemical and if Jim can't read the small print in the instructions, he should get a new pair of glasses.

**2nd:** Its now over two and a half years after having my benefit stopped following being forced to have an all work test, despite my protests that I was in an exempt category under the rules. The nice young doctor forgot to put what was wrong with me, even though I told him. After six tribunals, increasingly more and more like a Kafka novel, I won my case. Not even a sorry for all the harassment. It appears that if the examining doctor had known what was wrong with me, he wouldn't have stopped my benefit, leaving me for three weeks with pneumonia and no money or food. There were times when I thought my only crime was being disabled. Still we all know what disabled people are like, habitual scroungers who would fake death rather than work. Spent the rest of the day posing nude for the new Women's Institute calendar.

**3rd:** Nice young people at the village pharmacy gave me an information leaflet with the tablets from the doctor. Confirms my growing suspicions that I am a morphine addict. Spent the rest of the day feeling angry and confused. I always looked down on addicts, now, thanks to an uncaring society that makes me a criminal if I try to use a natural non-addictive pain killer, I am a criminal. Still I suppose we must all do our part to keep the

pharmaceuticals' shareholders dividends high. The doctors say Jim should be out of hospital in a week or two. When he called I was still angry, I told him that if I was a man they wouldn't do this to me, and that I might have a sex change. He said we couldn't afford another new wardrobe. When I told him that I didn't want any new bedroom furniture a nice young nurse came on the line saying he'd had a slight heart attack.

**4th:** Baked a ginger cake and made two dozen jars of jam for the weekly WI poker evening. When I ask Jim if we could plant the bottom field with canalise he had a small stroke.

**5th:** Which is the greatest crime, that of a society which says the only way to control severe pain is to become a drug addict or that of a society which makes me a criminal if I chose to use a safer alternative? Saw on the television that a man in Manchester had not been sent to prison for growing it. Would the police really notice if we planted the bottom field? Still don't feel good about myself, how can I tell Jim that I am a drug addict. I suppose I'll have to wait until he's had his twelfth pint of Scrumpy and is about to lose consciousness.

**6th:** Inseminated six cows before breakfast. Over a long veggie-burger which tastes like I might have grilled the box by mistake, I begin to worry about whether cows should have two heads or not. Jim's not so good today, the doctors say they may have to amputate his hand because of gangrene, well its his own fault, it said quite clearly in the instructions not to touch without five layers of protective gloves. Saw the Vicars wife run past the house naked

apart from a smile, she must have been at the magic mushroom tea again. I wonder if that birth mark on her bottom is the one Jim mumbles about in his sleep. If he ever regains consciousness I must ask him.

**7th:** Still in a state of shock at an Employment Tribunal decision concerning Direct payments. Some single cell amoeba decided that it wasn't actually the disabled person that employed the PA and who was consequently liable, but the local council. Is he saying that disabled people, despite recruiting and employing the PA, paying their salary, entering into a legally binding contract of employment, are not capable of being liable. Must bring it up next time I sit on the bench.

**8th:** Becoming increasingly worried that I actually used Jim's shaving foam and not the Xenophobic Bull Sperm. The milk appears to be more frothy by the day. When I go to the local post office, Mrs. Muggings confesses to being addicted to tranquillisers. Should we have a pill swapping party I wonder.

**9th:** Another bitter blow in my attempt to keep the farm running until Jim comes home, the chickens have started to lay green eggs. Jim is on the danger list, but I feel confident that those nice young people on the intensive care ward will make him better. I heard at the monthly jam seminar that the Vicars wife had been arrested running down the village street, without a stitch of clothing on, singing extracts from 'Kiss me Kate.'

**Mrs Dale (Major)**  
To be continued ...

# Question Time

## Disability Forum on Employment

### Research Project

#### Do You?

- Have a learning difficulty
- Care for someone with a learning difficulty
- Provide training towards employment
- Employ someone with a learning difficulty

#### We want your views on:

- Employment opportunities in Hull
- Progression routes/gaps in services
- Support networks available
- Perceptions of work

#### Why?

The research will contribute towards a long-term employment strategy for people with learning disabilities in Hull.

If you would like to be involved or require further information, please contact us as soon as possible as workshops, interviews and questionnaires will be held during February/March/April only.

Louise Hudson  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Stonefield House  
16 - 20 King Edward Street  
Hull  
HU1 3SS  
Tel: 01482 606024

Carole Sewell  
53 Witham  
Hull  
HU9 1BL  
Tel: 01482 211473

## Membership Survey

We'd like some feedback from you, our members, so we're going to be posing a series of questions over the coming issues of Loud & Proud covering a variety of topics. We'd really like to hear from you, so please send us your answers by letter, phone, fax, email or minicom:

### Direct Payments Questions

1) Would you say that you had a good understanding of the Social Model of Disability?

Yes/No

2) Would you like to find out more?

Yes/No

3) Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

Yes/No

4) If you are disabled would you describe your impairment as Mobility / Learning / etc ?

.....

5) Do you think that Direct payments could benefit you?

Yes/No

6) If not, why not?

.....

## Chris - Wide Eyed and Legless!

Hi I'm Chris, a new member of Choices & Rights. I passionately support the rights of disabled people. When a friend showed me an advertisement in the Hull Daily Mail from Choices & Rights wanting volunteers, I though - great! This group was offering support and advice to disabled people, the very thing that interested me.

So you may be thinking, what do I have to offer? First of all I can offer empathy. With experience of my own disability I can offer support.

What is my disability? Well to my friends I'm 'Wide Eyed and Legless', even when I haven't had a drink! Yeah mobility is an issue, but not one I am unable to handle. My 'chariot' is necessary for any distance, like shopping or pub-crawling! My crutches are used for shorter distances or if at hand, a 6ft 2in. handsome fella to give me a piggy-back - but girls - is there ever one around when you want one?

I like to do as much as I can to improve my condition. There is no cure for Multiple Sclerosis, but there are many things you can do to help maintain and improve your body.

First and foremost is good physiotherapy. Get yourself a good Neurology Physiotherapist. I have been very fortunate in having an excellent physio for the past 18 months. I don't have as many falls and my walking has improved greatly.

Sadly the NHS doesn't run to continual physio, so I must maintain the instructions I have been given. I also find massage is good to improve the circulation. A lady comes to my house once a week to massage my legs and back. She is a qualified masseuse and works in a physiotherapy department. She only treats people who require the service for medical reasons and keeps her costs reasonable so as just to cover her necessary expenses.

I personally feel diet is important. I have tried a few different diets, gluten free and 'food combining'. The gluten free did not help me, but I know of people with MS that is has helped. I felt a little better with food combining; i.e. not mixing your starches with proteins (The Hay Diet), but I found it difficult to stick to. The moral of this story is to try anything once because it might just help you.

What I do find beneficial is a couple of glasses of wine. It relaxes me, my writing it better and my walking is better ... as long as I don't have too much!

**Chris**  
*Choices & Rights Volunteer*

.....

## Don't Tar Us With The Same Brush

My son came to my home very angry and annoyed with himself and when I asked "What's the problem?", he replied "I'm never going to offer my assistance to a disabled person again".

I asked him to explain exactly what he meant by this. Apparently he saw a lady on an electric scooter and there were several young lads verbally abusing her.

"I went up to her and asked if she was alright? Once the youths saw me they went away, but she turned on me like I was some kind of thug, which I'm not, and literally screamed at me to GO AWAY, so I backed away".

"I tried to speak to her and explain that I understood how she was feeling as my mum also had an impairment and uses a scooter herself. The lady started to shout even louder and people were starting to stop and ask me what the problem was. I told them and once chap said 'Don't worry, you have tried to help her, there is nothing else you can do, she's not hurt, just very upset'."

My son asked me why the lady would have turned on him like that.

I popped the kettle on and by the time we were having a drink he was getting over his embarrassment and feelings of rejection.

I said, "The lady was very frightened and obviously in her state of panic she mistook *you* for a thug as well"

"Thanks mum that makes me feel really good", he said sarcastically.

"No son, I don't mean it like that - it was a normal reaction from a lady who was panicked".

I reminded my son of the time when I first moved into my bungalow and started going out on my scooter with my daughter-in-law and grandson (on the back of Lisa's bicycle). There were some youths who would always shout abuse at us, and tried pulling Lisa and Sam off their bike and also rocked my scooter in an attempt to tip it up.

"That was terrible mum, you were fearful of going out because of the way you were being treated!", he said.

"Yes, and you told me to face up to them Jon, but its easier said than done. I was scared and I'd just moved into a new home in a new area. I did try to ignore them the next time, and thankfully people had noticed what was happening and started to come and ask if I was OK."

"You knew all this Jon, and helped me by going to see the right people, but it still didn't stop me being panic stricken for months after until I built-up my confidence"

"How do you think that lady felt? Was there anything you could do to help alleviate her fears?". My son then picked up the phone, dialled a number and talked for a short while.

"Do you feel better now?", I asked.

"Yes mum. Hopefully the details I have given will help in some way in future."

"Sorry son, but its a cruel world and life is sometimes unfair for everyone, not just disabled people!"

**Rita Dale**  
*Choice & Rights Volunteer*

# Legal



Zem and Humphrey from the Humberside Law Centre offer you some interesting advice!

## NEW RIGHTS TO ACCESS EVERYDAY SERVICES - SHOPS, PUBS, ETC

There wasn't a lot of publicity about 1st October 1999, but this was the date that new rights came into force, which could improve our access to all sorts of information and places that we use (or would like to use!) in our daily lives.

I say could, because, unfortunately, a lot depends on us, as disabled people, being aware of our rights, and challenging pubs, shops, etc. when they discriminate against us.

Although these organisations should make changes to make it easier for disabled customers to use their services before a disabled person complains that they are being discriminated against, if no-one complains, those companies that want to will be able to carry on as before.

So what are these new rights? Briefly, any policies, practices and procedures, which discriminate against a disabled person should be changed.

So, for example, if you as a disabled person find it "unreasonably difficult" to queue at, say, the post office or the bank, because of your disability, the post office/bank has a duty to make changes - perhaps by allowing you to sit down until it is your turn.

Another example given in the Code of Practice is "Orange Badge"

parking spaces for disabled drivers/passengers. It is not enough for the local supermarket to have reserved spaces for disabled people. If they find that non-disabled people are parking in them, they should do something about it!

If you have an orange badge, and are always finding that reserved parking spaces at, for example, your local supermarket, are full of people who haven't, do inform the supermarket manager and check out the situation a few weeks later to see what action has been taken!

Places providing everyday services also have a duty to provide "auxiliary aids and services." This may mean, for example, help with shopping, information in other formats such as on audio tape or in large print, a temporary ramp.

Again, whilst some organisations should start offering such services, we need to be aware of our rights to request them.

Finally, where there are physical barriers to access such as, perhaps, steps and narrow doorways into a local bank, cinema, etc. the organisation must look at providing their service in another way if they can. For example, they may be able to use an alternative entrance, or provide a temporary ramp.

Although they do not need to make permanent changes to their premises until 2004, it could make sense to consider them if they are having some redecoration/rebuilding work done before then.

If they are going to get a temporary ramp, you might also

want to argue that they should get a permanent ramp in the first place, rather than a temporary one and then a permanent one later on!

A Code of Practice gives further information for business about these new rights. This stresses the need to consult with disabled customers, and local and national disability organisations.

We need to make the most of this opportunity, both as individuals and as a Disability Coalition, to improve access to a whole range of organisations, both for ourselves and others.

This is only a very brief introduction. I am in the process of producing some information leaflets/ tapes.

Meanwhile, if you would like further information, please don't hesitate to contact the **Humberside Law Centre** on **01482 211180** or (textphone) 01482 322855.

### Zem Rodaway

Disabled People's Rights Worker, Humberside Law Centre - and Management Committee Member, Choice & Rights.

## DDA : DOES THE ACT WORK?

The Disability Discrimination Act has been in force, in employment, for three years. Does it work?

Humberside Law Centre is a local legal advice agency which specialises in discrimination law and their experience suggests that, for



# Eagles

You can contact Zem or Humphrey at the  
Humberside Law Centre, Hull, Tel. No.: 01482 211180

.....

some people, some of the time, it can.

Mary Clark worked part time as a nurse in a Doctor's surgery. She had a progressive muscular condition affecting her arm and shoulder, which made it increasingly difficult to give injections and take blood.

After a preliminary medical report, the Practise simply announced her retirement, rather than attempt to change her work pattern so as to enable her to continue working.

She was awarded over £9000 in compensation.

Mrs Melton has epilepsy: she has occasional fits, at night. They had no effect on her work - as a temporary packer, supplied through an agency, in a factory.

Nevertheless the company refused to give her further work when they learnt of her epilepsy.

She was awarded £7500.

These are two of a number of similar, successful cases. The size of the awards is striking: Tribunals do take disability discrimination seriously - and so, in future, will these employers.

Not every applicant wins: reasons for losing include factual disputes: for example, where the employer claims they were not influenced by disability, but, selected for redundancy on length of service or performance grounds.

Also technical, legal defences - the notorious small employer exemption, for example (now reduced to under 15 employees - still

too many!)

Most of our cases have involved people already at work. We have also had some successes with job applicants.

Mr X, for example, did not make the short-list for a telephone advice job. He claimed because of his partial blindness, the employer claimed because of a lack of experience.

This case settled for a payment of £10,000.

What is apparent is that most employers - and most disabled people - are still unaware of their responsibilities and rights under the Disability Discrimination Act.

As an agency, we would welcome enquiries and will try and spread the word.

Contact **Zem** or **Humphrey** on **01482 211180**.

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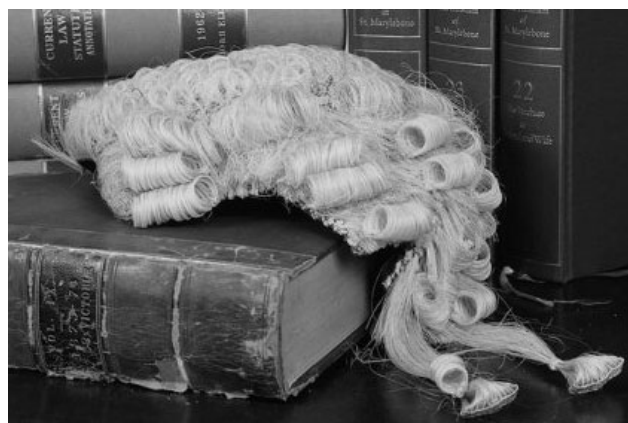
## COMMUNITY CARE LAW - YOUR RIGHTS

Community care and law don't normally go together; the idea of having legal rights, of suing Social Services for failing to provide an adequate care package, is both quite new in English law, and quite alien to most people working in the field.

Legally, the picture is evolving

very fast: while legal challenges are still exceptional, they can sometimes have a powerful effect.

Mrs A's disabled daughter faced a journey of over an hour each way to her Day Centre in a Social



Services bus, although the distance was only 7 miles.

Despite complaints, Social Services claimed they had no money to improve the service. After a legal challenge, taxis were provided so that all the Day Centre users benefited.

Mr A had been paying £14 pw for his four hours of home care. In fact, his means had been wrongly assessed, and he should not have been paying at all.

Humberside Law Centre have recently received National Lottery funding to appoint a Community Care lawyer to take similar cases and to provide information and advice to groups and individuals on Community Care law.

**Humphrey Forrest** can be contacted at the Humberside Law Centre, Hull, on **01482 211180**.

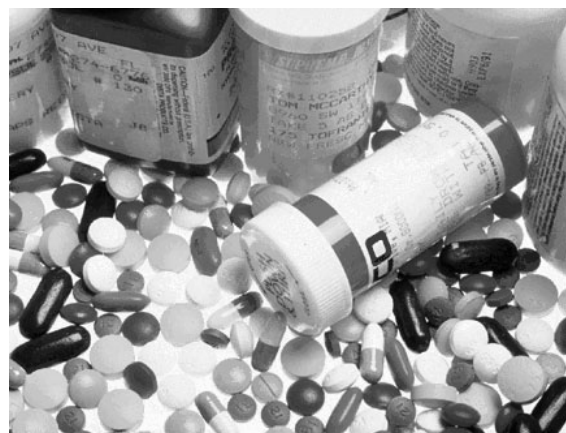
# ADDICT OR JAILBIRD - IS THAT A CHOICE?

Of all the areas of contemporary society that appear to be trapped in a time warp, health and community care policies under New Labour remain the most hypocritical, old , conservative and Victorian.

I would like to use my own disabilities as an example. I suffer from a cystic lung condition for which there is no cure, consequently the only treatments are antibiotics.

Unfortunately long term usage of antibiotics inevitably results in problems with resistance and various side effects, in particular the gradual destruction of the gut and colon.

In my own case I have reached a point where the antibiotics which previously kept me alive, are now beginning to kill me. When I asked my GP (who is the best I have ever had) if there was any alternative? he said "No", however there is a choice.



Most contemporary medicines originally came from plants, herb's and moulds (penicillin is a mould). So I decided to see a herbalist at the Natural Healing Centre.

Unlike most Health Service consultants, who just get uncomfortable and say there is nothing they can do, he said yes, I can help you. Which he did. I have just managed to go 41 days without antibiotics (my previous best was 23). In fact it was only a severe cold causing pleurisy, that forced me back onto antibiotics.

The natural antibiotics that the herbalist uses have no side effects and do not systematically destroy the

gut and colon. Unfortunately the Health Service will not pay for patients to see herbalists, so I have to pay my own consultation costs, and for the sixteen herb's I use every day. This can cost fifteen pounds per week, which as many of you will appreciate is very difficult when you depend upon inadequate state benefits.

Why can't patients choose to use alternative medicine like herbalism? Is it because of the huge amounts of money being spent by the pharmaceuticals industry to lobby the government and the health service? Or is it because the health service really doesn't want to increase their patients life expectation?

Like many other patients I would like to have choice and control over the treatment which is best for me. Not be just another victim of the God like patronising health care professionals who know what is best for me, as if I don't exist and can't make decisions for myself.

Even more deplorable is the way society and health care professionals treat patients who suffer from severe pain. In my own case I have growths on the outer parts of my lungs which is very debilitating. We have no choices and certainly no rights when it comes to treating chronic pain. The only real treatment available, other than TEN's for severe pain is the use of opiates, but opiates are physically addictive!

Like many others, I don't want to be an opiate addict. Unfortunately there is no alternative according to the Health Service. Like it or not, society hypocritically condemns the use of opiates for recreational use (quite rightly) but forces disabled people to become addicts, why?

There IS a natural alternative - Cannabis. A class 'B' drug that has been used in the East for thousands of years. However the illogical hysteria that surrounds its use blinds doctors and physicians whose hypocritical oath

(joke) says they should relieve suffering , but who blindly continue to addict their patients to class 'A' drugs.

Not only are more and more patients finding that cannabis works for them, often when opiates don't, it's not physically addictive. In the thousands of years that it has been used there is not a single death attributable to its use.

Not only does it act as an analgesic (painkiller) it is also a proven antispasmodic (stops you being sick), anti-inflammatory and bronchial dilator (prescribed bronchial dilators in very large dosages make you shake and destroy the heart).

If I do a peak-flow reading following use of chemical bronchial dilators it might increase by 10-15 litres per minute, with cannabis it is over 30, and that is without damaging my heart or making me shake like an alcoholic.

All many of us want are the choices and rights, which by their very nature are empowering, to use safe, alternative, non physically addictive treatments.

What kind of civilised society and medical profession is it that makes criminals out of those who simply want to control severe pain without becoming opiate addicts?

We continue to blindly legitimise the mass murder of countless thousands of individuals, either directly or indirectly, through legal drugs such as tobacco and alcohol. Are new Labour and society so blinded with their obsessive pursuit of profit that it can't even understand the cruel hypocrisy of their action?

Are many health care professionals so determined to maintain their unquestionable Godlike power that they will not even listen to reason or put the welfare of their patients first?

Choices and Rights! What Choices and Rights?

**Author:** Another Victim of a hypocritical society.

# CABARET A BIG SUCCESS

This is a review from the Hull Daily Mail entertainment guide on Mon 11 Oct. 1999, by Fiona Landers:

The second Loud & Proud Disability Arts Cabaret was billed as a showcase of some of the country's hottest properties in the disability arts field and that was certainly true.

The cabaret was held at Hull Truck Theatre last night to coincide with World Mental Health Day and the audience was treated to four very different artists with one thing in common - their talent.

Not forgetting the talented woman who held the show together - compere, actor and comedian Michele Taylor.

Comedian and musician Shirley Novak got the evening off to a great start. Her powerful voice and wit between songs went down a storm at the Spring Street Theatre.

Shirley teamed up with compere Michele for a rousing rendition of Abba's Dancing Queen and a very funny song about dieting, as they performed together as duo Bitter and Twisted.

Singer/Songwriter and performance poet Jeff Lawson got over a tricky start when he had problems with his guitar to sing a powerful set of songs.

Actor/Musician Mat Fraser performed a number of rap songs and poems. The honest, in-your-face lyrics were an expression of his views on everything from how the not so nice people get to the top in life and on certain comedians' attitudes to the disabled.

Rounding off the night was a second stunning performance from Caroline Parker. The artist performed in the first half of the show and when she returned, her songs - which she performed in sign language - brought cheers from the stalls, especially her interpretation of Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody.

Funded by the National Lottery Charities Board, the cabaret was presented by the Choices & Rights Disability Coalition in association with ArtLink Exchange and Hull Truck Theatre.

All that is left to say is roll on next year for cabaret number three.

## How to send us your articles ...

We prefer you to send articles as computer files since this makes our layout work easier and quicker. If you don't have access to a computer, handwritten articles are best submitted in BLOCK CAPS text where possible.

### Tips for sending computer generated files:

Save/Export your file as:

*Plain Text (.txt)*

*Rich Text Format (.rtf)*

Please DO NOT save the files in your programs native format as we may not be able to read/access them. To send us a computer file please use one of the following media types:

#### (IBM / PC Format)

3.5" Floppy Disc

Zip 100/250MB Disc

CD-ROM

#### (MAC Format)

3.5" Floppy Disc

#### Notes for email:

Please insert as a file, or clearly mark where the article starts/ends.

#### Where to send your articles:

#### Email:

lp@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk

#### Post:

Choices & Rights  
Arthur Richardson Centre  
Savoy Road  
Hull  
HU8 0TX

#### Fax:

01482 788668

## READY, WILLING AND ABLE!

No, I'm not about to introduce three new volunteers to you!

Ready, Willing and Able is the title of a new recruitment bulletin for disabled people.

RWA is the brainchild of two disabled writers, Nick Lewis and Michael Turner, and is aimed at bringing together employers looking to extend their equal opportunities policy and disabled people who are keen to find a job.

RWA was launched on October 18th 1999 and is free to disabled people.

Contact Nick Lewis on 0181 696 7006 for further details, or email: rwa@lineone.net

## MEDICAL DISABILITY

A short poem just for you:

Doctors are the gods of illness  
who have a cure for everything,  
Cut this out, ingest this now,  
a chemical answer for everything

Swap an old bit for a new bit,  
you can have a new face any day  
Even if your death is inevitable  
they have pills to smooth the way

But still there is one frontier left  
for which there is no medication,  
While doctors have their blinkers on,  
there'll be no cure for discrimination!

**Duncan Edge**

Poet and C & R Volunteer

## STOP PRESS

C & R Website has moved .....

Our website has moved to our own webspace at Demon Internet, here's the new web address:

<http://www.choicesandrights.demon.co.uk>  
(all typed together on one line!)

Our old web pages have been setup to redirect your browser to our new site, but if you have any links or bookmarks to our website could you please update them as soon as possible.



# Disability Information Service

Using our own *local area* data and the national database provided and updated by DIAL UK, we are able to offer you lots of practical information on all sort of topics including:

- Law & Rights
- Education
- Social Issues
- Holidays
- Transport
- Accommodation
- Direct Payments
- Volunteering
- Personal Matters
- Arts & Leisure
- Aids & Equipment
- Sports & Interests

The lines are open from 10:00am to 4:00pm on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. You may leave an answerphone message at all other times.

 - **01482 788600**

Minicom - 01482 789320 Fax - 01482 788688

## Contact Details



### *Independent Living/Direct Payments*

**Liesel Dickinson** Independent Living Scheme Coordinator  
**01482 789320** Voice/Minicom/Answerphone  
email Liesel: [liesel@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk](mailto:liesel@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk)

### *General Disability Issues*

**Liesel Dickinson / Mark Baggley**  
**01482 788600** Voice/Minicom/Answerphone  
email: [enquiry@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk](mailto:enquiry@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk)

### *Housing Issues*

**Mark Baggley** Habinteg Training and Information Officer  
**01482 789008** Voice/Answerphone  
email Mark: [habinteg@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk](mailto:habinteg@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk)



Choices & Rights Disability Coalition are funded by the National Lottery Charities Board. We are full members of BCODP and affiliated to DIAL UK.