

# Loud & Proud

Spring 2002

© Choices & Rights Disability Coalition

## "FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH"

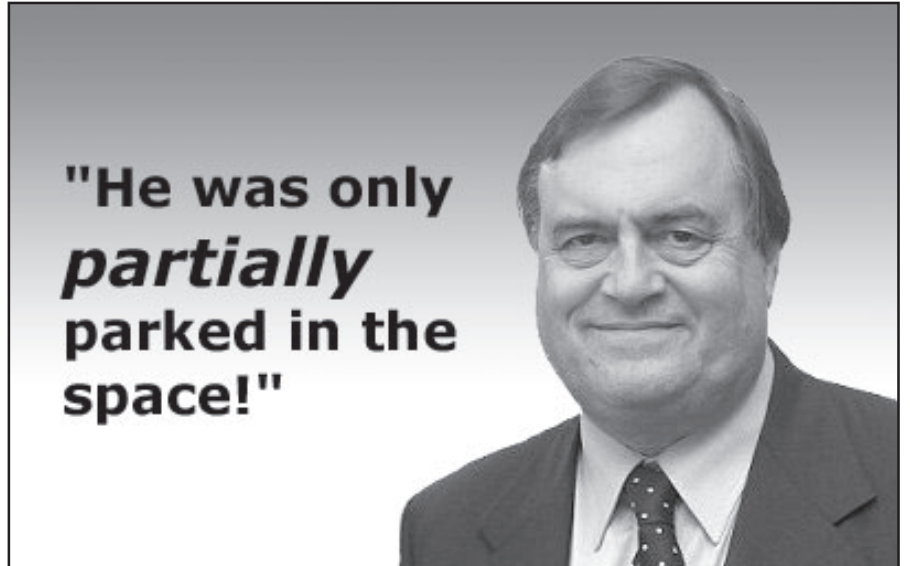
### John Prescott - The Truth!!

No doubt many of you read the story about our Chair, Mark Baggley, and his dispute with the Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott over car parking at the China Palace restaurant in Hull.

Although the reporting was generally accurate, Loud & Proud have got the complete story and can get rid of some of the myths circulated at the time. Over to Mark...

"The most amazing part of the story for me is that I shouldn't have even been at Mr Chu's that night! I'd been invited there for a friend's Birthday party but I was supposed to be at a conference in Manchester. However, instead of staying over in Manchester, as I had originally intended, I decided to come back and go to the party. (So, myth one can be killed: No, it wasn't a set up to get publicity for me or for Choices and Rights!)"

"I was driving that night and I



picked up my friend Karen (Myth 2: No she isn't disabled as it was reported by some of the press).

On turning into the restaurant car park we saw that the disabled badge spaces were full, and had to park around 20 yards from the entrance. After looking at the cars in the spaces, we couldn't see any badges on display. Karen joked that "the Jag must be John Prescott's". I laughed and said that I didn't think he'd be that stupid.....".

As I entered the restaurant I overheard a couple talking and one of them said "oh yes, he's often here". I guessed that they meant Mr. Prescott. This made me quite angry as I couldn't believe that a person with such a high public profile and position of authority would park in a space designated for disabled people.

Without really thinking about it, I asked a waiter if Mr Prescott was in the building and he helpfully pointed out his table. I wheeled

over to his table and found him sat with his wife, and who I presumed was the owner of the restaurant. I apologized for interrupting his meal (although I believe he had finished eating) and asked him if it was his Jag in the disabled badge space. 'Yes' he said, and so I then asked him if he had an orange badge. He didn't answer, but asked me if I wanted him to move it. I said 'yes', and left him to his meal. About a minute later, he got up and moved his car but he didn't apologise."

"It's at this point that I must clarify Myth 3, put around by Mr. Prescott's press office: It was claimed by them that he was only 'partially' parked in the space. It is true that two of his wheels were outside the space, but that's only because the car was so big!!!"

"There was no room to park in the disabled space and there isn't a space next to it big enough for a car. There's a gap of about 2-3 feet before the end of the parking

### Inside:

- 3 • Pizza Hut Revamp
- 4 • Access Audit Project
- 6 • Disability Rights Commission
- 8 • Survival Guide "A Doctors Home Visit"
- 10 • Charity Poetry
- 11 • C & R Conference
- 14 • Euthanasia
- 15 • Git Award !!

## L&P Roll Call:

### Editor:

Mark Bagglely

#### Choices & Rights

01482 788668

editor@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk

### Layout & Design:

Shaun Hague

#### dtop Web Design

01482 323010

shaun@dtopwebdesign.com

### Repro/Printing:

#### Centre 88

01482 324541

### Submit Articles to:

Loud & Proud Newsletter  
 Choices & Rights  
 Disability Resource Centre  
 Arthur Richardson Centre  
 Savoy Road  
 Hull  
 HU8 0TX

Tel: 01482 788668

Fax: 01482 788668

TypeTalk: 0800 959598

lp@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk

If you have any comments or suggestions for future issues of Loud & Proud, please let us know.

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

area, so if he has a Jaguar that can park in 2-3 feet of space, it must be a Tardis!"

"Myth 4 was that I rushed to the press to 'sell my story' - not true! When I got to work on Monday I discussed it with the office and we thought that it might be worth speaking to "Disability Now" as they are involved in a campaign called 'Baywatch', highlighting abuse of orange badge spaces. After contacting them with my story, the guy I spoke to nearly fell off his chair. Disability Now asked if I would keep the story quiet and wait until their next publication date in about 4 weeks time. I agreed and thought no more about it. However, the following day, the fun started!"

"The Hull Daily Mail phoned, asking about an incident involving me and Mr. Prescott. They had all the basic details, but even now I have no idea of how they got the story. I immediately phoned Disability Now to explain that I hadn't talked to anyone, but that the Hull Daily Mail were on to it. Disability Now then decided to ring the national press. Within an hour, I got calls from most of the daily papers and photographers from the 'Sun' and 'Mirror' arranged to come down and take pictures. I did think the story might have some national interest, but I had no idea of how big it was going to be."

"The next morning I woke up for work to find three messages from Liesel. Apparently, BBC Radio 4 had woken her at 7am trying to get hold of me! I rang them and after various phone calls found myself 'live' on BBC Radio 5, Radio 4 and Radio Humberside."

"Recovering from this I set off to attend a conference at Beverley

Leisure Centre. Arriving I was greeted by the receptionist telling me that Yorkshire TV wanted to speak to me and then both Viking Radio and Look North rang. Someone showed me a copy of the Daily Mirror and I was amazed to find "my story" had a full page and pictures! By the end of the day, Mr. Prescott's press office had issued the 'partially parked in the space' story."

"We discovered that Mr. Prescott was going to be back at Mr Chu's that night and John Gilling suggested we go back to protest. I pointed out to John that as the Prime Minister was also attending, there would be Special Branch present, and as they carry guns protesting further didn't seem a healthy option!"

So after all the fuss, has it made a difference? Well, the best thing about the story was that I did not receive one negative comment. Everyone who spoke to me about the incident was positive, angry that he had abused the space and thought there should be more action taken to prevent abuse. Interestingly, many non-disabled people stopped me and commented that they had a relative, etc. who often had the same problems. It was slightly embarrassing to be stopped in shops, etc. by people who had recognized me, although there were some funny moments.

For example, after attending an ice hockey forum at the Ice Arena (nothing to do with disability), I raised my arm to speak and was greeted with "What's up Mark, someone in your parking space?"

My favorite moments? The front page of the Guardian, complete with cartoon and the amount of people who have spoken to me and supported the campaign.

# Pizza Hut Revamp - Easier Access

I would like to say a big "Thank You" to the design team who have recently refurbished the Pizza Hut in Jameson Street, Hull. My recent visit to the store with my family impressed me so much I felt compelled to write this article.

Much thought has gone in to the redesign of this restaurant to accommodate all their customers. I have always enjoyed visiting Pizza Hut for many years, and despite the exceptionally friendly and courteous staff, I have experienced difficulty in the past with access for my wheelchair to fit at a table due to the seating plan and furniture/food display cabinets hindering this. It was also impossible for me to access the hot buffet counter in my wheelchair, and a companion had to always select my food for me.

I thought the restaurant looked larger on my recent visit (which did happen to correspond with their head office visit), and was amazed to be told that there are the same number of seats as before!

I was able to propel my wheelchair to a table, get myself to the food counter, instruct my companion as to what I wanted (I would have attempted to serve myself, but even when I was able bodied I was known for making a terrible mess - and hey, I was wearing my new gear!)

I spoke to the design team who were visiting from head office and thanked them for considering all access needs. They kindly took this photograph for me, and it is clear that extra space has indeed been created in the shuffling of seats, the buffet bar is just at the end of the wide aisle and the disabled toilets are to the left at the end of the aisle.

The other good thing is that the entire restaurant is now

in a limited space it is possible to make access easier and accommodate all of the public.

I challenge other restaurants to accept my throwing down the gauntlet in to re-thinking their current provisions for disabled people, because if they don't do something to compete, we all know where we can go now!

My visit was truly made complete by seeing the amount of care and effort that had gone into



completely non smoking too!

The staff are excellent, nothing is too much trouble (just one small point - why do they always ask if everything is OK at the same moment as I am filling my mouth?) - not a pretty sight, I can assure you - they are very tolerant! And it goes without saying the food is divine!

Well done to the Pizza Hut who have proved to other companies by example that even

the re- vamp. Many thanks to Pizza Hut, see you all soon. Best wishes to all your continued success!

Gina Tyler



# What is the Access

**Creating an accessible environment and fully accessible transport** are two of the seven needs of integrated independent living as established by the disabled people's movement. The seven needs being:

- Accessible Information
- Peer Support
- Housing
- Personal Assistance
- Accessible Environment
- Equipment and Adaptations
- Accessible Transport

The Disability Movement and the Professions' MJ Oliver, Professor of Disability Studies at the University of Greenwich wrote the following:

'... too much is invested in individually based interventions with ever-diminishing returns. As a consequence, modifications to environments tend to be neglected or under resourced when the potential benefits of such investments are much greater. To put it simply, providing a barrier-free environment is likely to benefit everyone with mobility impairments as well as other groups (e.g. mothers with prams and pushchairs and the elderly)...'

Through conferences, discussions with members, our own personal experiences and the work of a dedicated volunteer 'Access Officer', who as well as receiving all planning applications submitted to the local council for comments and recommendations at the planning stage, also co-



ordinated volunteers with a range of impairments to undertake access audits.

Choices and Rights submitted a funding bid to the National Lottery Charities Board to employ an Access Audit Co-ordinator and fund a three-year Access Audit project in Kingston-upon-Hull.

## What would the project do?

The Access Audit Project would address Physical and Environmental barriers by:

- developing individual access audits in accordance with the relevant sections of the Disability Discrimination act and part M of the building regulations
- recruiting and training a

team of disabled volunteer access audit officers

- developing accessible training and audit packages
- ensuring that access issues are represented on relevant statutory and voluntary bodies locally and nationally
- making comments and recommendations on all planning applications submitted to the local council at the planning stage
- facilitating a program of training based upon the 'social model' of disability as an empowering tool for disabled people in order to change behaviour and practice and to widen perceptions of access issues
- producing reports and

# Audit Project about?

project information for workers team meetings, management committee meetings and funders reports

- arranging follow up visits to ensure organisations have implemented audit recommendations
- attending weekly team meetings and other related management and funding meetings
- employing an Access Audit Co-ordinator
- Access Audits and Equality Training in Perspective

Access Audits (AA) and disability Equality Training (DET) are closely entwined with the growth of organisations of disabled people and have contributed to feelings of positive worth and empowerment. They also influence policies of public and commercial organisations, while helping disabled people to take back control of our own lives.

They raise the profile of disabled people, while allowing us to educate ourselves, make people aware of disability and access issues and help change the general view of disabled people.

The projects provide an opportunity to develop and release the potential of the recruited volunteers (all of who will be disabled) who will benefit from:

- Being part of a unique project, working in a positive, encouraging and supportive

environment; with full access to comprehensive Organisational Policies and Procedure.

- Receiving appropriate training and an assessment of skills.
- Flexibility in 'task options'.
- New learning opportunities including where appropriate the opportunity to represent Choices and Rights on various management committees and at conferences - local, regional and national.

## How will this project benefit disabled people?

The principle benefits of the project are to disabled people who are able to:

- directly access projects, services and training opportunities, managed by disabled people for disabled people, based upon the 'social model' of disability, that previously were quite simply denied to us
- benefit from opportunities for volunteering, which disabled people have previously been denied access to (taking the voluntary sector as a whole), due to physical or attitudinal barriers
- develop motivation, confidence, competency, and be encouraged to gain relevant qualifications; with a view to either entering or returning to paid employment
- manage and run our own services and take back control of our own lives
- educate organisations and non disabled people of the issues

affecting disabled people, in order to encourage change and ultimately new opportunities in the mainstream (e.g. jobs, leisure activities) which have previously been denied through lack of access and due to attitude.

'Disabled people are among the poorest of the poor, living lives of disadvantage and deprivation. Traditionally disability has been seen as the "problem" of the individual and it has been the individual who has had to change, or be changed by professionals through rehabilitation or cure.

Now, disabled people and their organisations, have described from their own experience how it is economic and social barriers which stop people with impairments participating fully in society.

These barriers are so widespread that we are prevented from ensuring a good quality of life for ourselves. The new challenge is for disabled people and policy-makers to share their expertise and to decide on alternative solutions to the "problem" of disability, based on removing society's barriers and upon full integration, allowing disabled people full and equal participation in society.'

To find out more about the Access Project and Access issues visit the Choices and Rights website:

[www.choicesandrights.demon.co.uk](http://www.choicesandrights.demon.co.uk)

... or email our Access Officer:

[access@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk](mailto:access@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk)

# Disability Rights Commission

## Creating a Better Service for Disabled People

### If the world were like this, how quickly would non-disabled people complain?

This is the caption for the new advert from the Disability Rights Commission which will be appearing in supermarket car-parks and in disabled people's toilets around the country.

It shows shows car parking spaces where each space displays the yellow wheelchair symbol and there is only one space without it.

There are also two classified adverts which will appear the in the *Classified* sections of national and local press - amidst the range of usual consumer adverts.

Choices & Rights fully support the new campaign and we're hoping that the poster and classified ads will help to make an impact on people who continue to abuse and infringe upon the rights of disabled people.

One of our committee advisors had the self same idea for a poster and I thought he'd already seen this new poster from the DRC, but it turned out he hadn't - talk about great minds thinking alike!

If you have any ideas for posters or adverts that Choices & Rights could use for our own campaigns, or ads we could run in the Loud & Proud newsletter, please send them to our office, or email:

[posters@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk](mailto:posters@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk)

### Poster Advert



### Classified Adverts

**If any business refuses to cater for your disability, don't put up with it. Call the Disability Rights Commission on 08457 622633 or textphone 08457 622644. [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org)**

**If you're turned down for any job because of a disability, don't put up with it. Call the Disability Rights Commission on 08457 622633 or textphone 08457 622644. [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org)**

## Report all about it...

Our Annual General Meeting is over for another year (held 28 November), if you were a conference delegate you will have received a copy of our annual report, our members will also have received a copy through the post. If you haven't received your copy, or are not a member but would like a copy, you can find out more about the work we have done over the past year and plan to do in the future by contacting the office and requesting a copy of our annual report in whatever format you prefer.

## Fancy being a model?

Did anyone see a recent article in the Hull Daily Mail about Reachwood Mobility?

as an in ichwood and Rights isleading for e who would e company, e, rather ganisation a profit.

we also thought that it would also have been a much more positive advert if it had used disabled models in the pictures, rather than having company employees. Surely, a non-disabled person pretending to be in a wheelchair/scooter is the equivalent of a man dressing as a woman or a white person "blacking up"?

We wrote to Marc Astley at the Hull Daily Mail with out comments and to give credit to the Mail, he promptly replied. Mark said " You are quite right that this was a paid for advertising feature and that it

should have been branded as such. I have spoken to the journalists involved in putting the pages together and advised them to ensure that any future features of this kind are clearly labelled.

I also agree it would have been better to use disabled models. However, time pressures sometimes mean we have to arrange these photo shoots at short notice. If you know of anyone who would be happy to model at a future date, please let me know and we will keep their names on file"

So, we've already got six disabled people willing to model (The CIL team). Would you like the chance to pose? If you're interested, don't think you've got to look like Cindy Crawford or Mel Gibson - please ring the Choices and Rights office and we'll get your name added to the list.

Who knows where it could lead?

## Keeping Fit

Dear Friends,  
Would anyone be interested in attending a gym, if it were suitably equipped and had a knowledgeable staff member who was sympathetic to disabled peoples needs within a fitness instruction environment.

Many people with disabilities would like to attend a gym, but have commonly found that they feel demoralised, frustrated or simply lose enthusiasm as they meet with too many access challenges, and are unable to physically use equipment or facilities already in place.

I would like to pioneer a campaign to get a gym to agree to provide adapted equipment and provide reasonable access to other fitness areas. As I have

already said, many of us would like to attend a gym if they physically could.

Of course I will take the nice approach as is my usual style (honest!!!) however, I have not ruled out 'Ram-raiding' the venue with my wheelchair whilst wildly swinging my handbag and singing a slaughtered rendition of Queens 'I Want To Break Free' whilst wearing a pink and yellow leotard, green leggings, and purple sparkly sweatbands! Not a pretty sight I can assure you, 'But Hey' if it attracts publicity to my cause – who cares!

Of course the sensible approach is naturally more to my nature (YEH RIGHT!), and it would be really good if I could approach someone and say "look, these are potential customers willing to use your gym if you will accommodate them".

With this in mind I would love to hear from anyone who would like to offer their support, and would like to attend a gym that could facilitate them. Please call Choices and Rights Office and leave your details.

I will hopefully have a result, and will inform you of this as soon as I can, and naturally any result will be published in our next edition of 'Loud and Proud'.

Warm Regards,  
Gina Tyler.



# Survival Guide: Disability Living Allowance 'A Doctors Home Visit'

**1. If the Benefits Agency decides they want a report from one of their Doctor's (known as an Examining Medical Practitioner or EMP) you should be notified in advance of the time and date of the examination and the name of the visiting doctor.** Benefits Agency guidelines say 10 days notice in writing should be given. If the doctor turns up unannounced, or at too short notice for you to arrange for someone to be with you, you are entitled to refuse to see him until an appointment has been made.

**2. When you are notified of a visit contact your local DIAL straight away.** For details of your nearest DIAL look in the phone book or ring 01302 310123 for details. Your DIAL can explain your rights in detail. In certain circumstances you have the right to request that a different doctor from the one named visit you.

**3. Always have someone with you during the examination;** this could be a friend or family member. Make sure that the person stays with you when the doctor arrives and remains with you throughout the whole examination. You have the right to have someone with you during the examination. Either you or your friend should note how long the doctor takes over the examination, any medical checks that are made and any comments by the doctor. Keep these notes safe as you may well need them in the future.

**4. The doctor may want to perform a physical examination.** Do not let the doctor browbeat you into doing something that you know you cannot do or that will cause you pain or damage your health.

**5. Be truthful, but do not be bullied or intimidated into saying things that you know are not strictly correct,** for example under estimating your needs. On the other hand do not overplay your problems as the doctor may suspect that you are not as disabled as you really are!!

**6. You will be asked to sign a statement which is your own description of your care and mobility needs** – during the examination the doctor should have been recording your statement about your disabilities. When you sign, you are confirming that the statement recorded is correct. You are not signing to say that the doctor has been to visit you or signing so that the doctor can be paid. Only sign the statement once you have read it or have it read back to you. If you do not agree with any of the information written, say so and ask the doctor to change things.

**7. If you are still not happy with the changes to the statement or the doctor will not make any alterations, you can refuse to sign the form.** If this happens contact your local DIAL group straight away to explain things. The DIAL can contact the Benefits Agency on your behalf to explain why you did not sign your statement. There is a separate section of the report form

where the Doctor gives her/his own opinion about your disabilities. The Doctor is entitled to reach a different opinion from you, but should not try to persuade you to change your statement so that it agrees with that opinion.

**8. If you have any complaints about the doctor's manner or attitude, or the way in which the examination was carried out, contact your local DIAL who can advise you on the complaints procedure.** You are entitled to complain if you are unhappy about the examination. Registering a complaint will not adversely affect your claim and your complaint will help identify how many doctors are not performing the examinations properly. Your complaint will count.

**9. If you are unhappy with the decision on your claim for Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance, whether or not you have had a visit by an EMP, contact your local DIAL for advice.** You have the right to challenge the decision of the Benefits Agency but only have **one month** from the date of the decision. So, don't delay, get advice as soon as you can.

Produced by:

**DIAL UK**, St. Catherines, Tickhill Road, Doncaster, DN4 8QN

This guide has been based on the original survival guide produced by DIAL Swansea. DIAL UK gratefully acknowledges DIAL Swansea's permission to produce this guide.



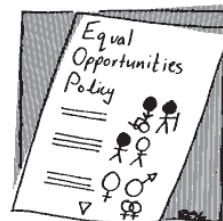
## Volunteering Opportunities At The CIL

3 of the services offered by the **Centre for Independent Living** have volunteering opportunities, they are:

- Access
  - Disability Equality
  - Peer Support
- The Access Project will require volunteers to help with consultation on plans and Access audits etc.



- The Disability Equality Project requires volunteers to assist in delivering Disability Equality Training to both statutory and voluntary agencies.



- The Peer Support Service requires volunteers to train as Peer Support Workers to deliver Support to their disabled peers on a one to one or group situation or both.

We organise training days on a regular basis to enable any potential volunteers to find out more about the volunteering opportunities and to give an insight into Disability Equality and the Social Model of Disability.



If anybody is interested in attending you can ring John Gilling for further details on **01482 336105** or **01482 788668** alternatively you can write to John at:

**The Centre for Independent Living**  
**Arthur Richardson Centre**  
**Savoy Road Hull HU8 0TX**



# Charity .. Charity!

Dedicated to the HUGE 'disability' charities who keep us down.. we know who they are!

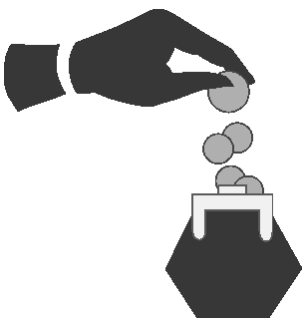
Please do forward this poem round and see if we can hit them in the pocket. If you like, add underneath the name of your least favourite oppressive charity (see one of mine in the below poem).

If everyone online stopped donating to our oppressors... maybe small groups not funded by leeches, those really fighting for justice (now scraping for pennies) ... would get there and we could change this world so its better for everyone.

Here's my poem:

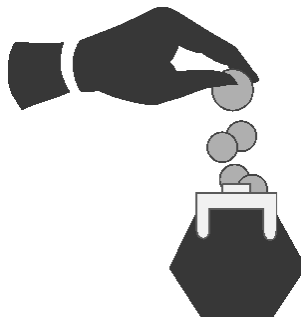
## How to help!

Do you donate to those huge charities making millions a year 'for' people like me? Some of them now have been here for decades, all your money given made little change.

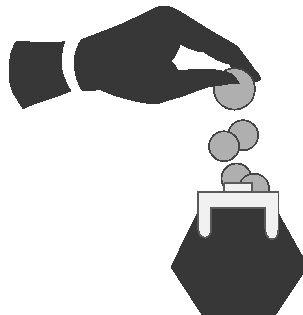


The existence of those charities depends on dependency, what we really need is freedom and equality.

we never asked them to represent us!  
we do self represent, but its hard raising funds.



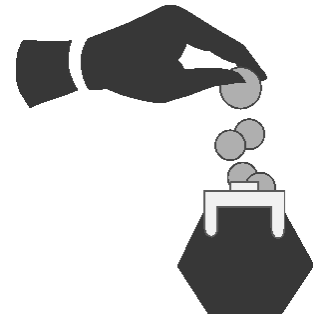
So this year don't give to those HUGE charities, assist groups run by disabled people please. just respect us, employ us and let us in, don't abuse us, exclude us, or dump us in homes.



Give information in Braille and on tape do, in plain English and sign language video too, don't sneer or judge us as less than you, let us in to your schools, your community too.



Give support to us fighting to change the world. not who need us in need, because that's how they earn. If you'd like to help our people, then please, help us change society and don't donate 5p.



Clair lewis,  
Disabled activist  
Oct 2001

[agicrip@hotmail.com](mailto:agicrip@hotmail.com)

With special wishes to RNID who I am told have UK 40 Million of Deaf money, while they employ hearing staff who can't sign... tout for Deaf volunteers... and work with those who weave deaf oppression into money (e.g. those lining deaf babies up and jamming experimental cochlear implants into their skulls.)

Clair

Crip-stirring Culture:  
[www.johnnypops.demon.co.uk/poetry/](http://www.johnnypops.demon.co.uk/poetry/)

# C & R Conference

Thank you to all delegates, speakers and organisers of this year's November conference for a superb day!

I myself have to say it has left me buzzing and motivated to make more of an effort to take the bull by the horns and educate those who are in the dark about equality for both my peers and myself.

Struggling to do everyday tasks just because I use a wheelchair is old hat, and before any changes can be made to attitudes we need to change our own. This sometimes means being brave and complaining or constructively criticising access to services and buildings. And remember you are never alone, you always have your friends at Choices & Rights to offer practical advice and moral support on all areas of disability issues. Ring us and find out what we do, if you really feel inspired to do more then why not become a member of Choices & Rights?

Thank you to everyone that kindly completed an evaluation form for us, we have noted all the comments made and have found great value in your points raised and it had really helped us to evaluate the success of the event.

Generally you all agreed that the Venue was good to excellent, the parking facilities were great and made life easier for delegates.

We are also pleased that all dietary requests were also

catered for and the food was lovely.

We must apologise profusely for the problems we had with the "Loop System". These were problems totally beyond our control. It must be noted that the loop was in perfect working order on the day. Unfortunately, the frequency was tuned into the wrong event, which meant that instead of picking up our conference – it was picking up a "Physics" lecture at the university nearby, and despite enormous efforts to rectify it, it remained tuned in to that "Gripping Event" for the rest of the day. We therefore decided that rather than have everyone become too excitable on the contents of the lecture, we couldn't compete and therefore thought it wise to keep your attention on OUR conference and turned it off.

Most delegates enjoyed the workshops and found them very educational and useful. Some feedback was that the workshops were just not long enough to discuss all the issues applicable. We have made a note of this for next year.

In particular the consumer workshop was a favourite with many, and delegates had plenty to say but not enough time to say it in. It is appropriate to mention that our Access Worker – Duncan Edge invited 15 retailers to participate in the workshops, however only Tesco and Asda took up this opportunity (or challenge). A special thanks is

appropriate to Wayne Padian and Phil Davies for their participation.

We have had a lot of interest from people who said they would be interested in attending a half day seminar on consumer and access issues that were not completely discussed in the workshop due to the lack of time. If you are interested in attending an afternoon to talk about shopping issues, please contact Duncan Edge at Choices & Rights Office (01482) 788668. We will organise this if there is enough interest expressed.

So, on the whole an excellent conference, a lot of thought and planning went into the organisation of the event with the emphasis being placed on access, I think we can all agree that it was certainly "mission accomplished" and we are all really looking forward to next years conference!

Gina Tyler

A member of Choices and Rights' staff has attended several conferences and meetings that have been totally inaccessible for some disabled people.

This has prompted Choices and Rights to produce a "Good Practice Guide" to holding accessible conferences, meetings, seminars etc. Copies of the guide cost £2.00 and are available from the office. To obtain a copy please send a cheque made payable to Choices & Rights Disability Coalition (address on the back page.)

# Bit of this ...

## Motability

I recently wrote to Motability, suggesting that it would be a good idea if they could look to negotiate a cleaning arrangement with car dealers for those of us who can't clean the car ourselves or get into a car wash. My idea was that as Motability are the biggest lease car company in Europe, they might be able to negotiate a good deal. This would benefit both the disabled driver and Motability as it would ensure that the car was kept in tip top condition. In their magazine, they are always asking for suggestions and I just thought it might be worth investigating.

Imagine my surprise, when I received a reply from their Customer services Department reminding me of my "responsibilities" to keep the car clean! The letter read like a severe telling off from a school teacher and I was less than impressed. I wrote again, pointing out the tone of the letter and that I was well aware of my responsibilities. I then received another letter from them, apologizing for the tone of the first letter and stating that they had spoken to my Motability dealer about my letter and suggest I contact them.

I wasn't particularly impressed by their response as I had just written to suggest what I thought was a good idea. I didn't expect a telling off and I didn't expect them to contact my dealer. The next time I have a suggestion for Motability, I'll keep it to myself.

Clearly, they only want suggestions that they suggest. After all, why should one of the biggest disability charities (and one of the richest) want to listen to disabled people's view? We only keep them in jobs.

## Car Parking at Victoria House

Victoria House is a building that houses various parts of the Hull and East Riding Community health NHS Trust, including the wheelchair services clinic. Car parking is in very short supply and there are only two orange badge spaces available. Both are very well sited and are near the doors of the wheelchair clinic.

Liesel and I have been attending meetings here for over two years and on most occasions, the spaces have been full with Hospital Transport vans parked in the spaces! Despite numerous requests and meetings with various officers, we were unable to resolve the situation. We also continued to receive complaints from other disabled people unhappy with this situation.

Finally, Choices and Rights wrote to Linda Glasby, the Chief Executive of the Trust, explaining that this was a clear breach of the Disability Discrimination Act. And that we would like to see it corrected as soon as possible.

Well, it has taken a few months to sort out, but we are pleased that we have been able to resolve the situation. Linda Glasby has now written to Choices and

Rights to confirm that a new loading area has been identified for the van drivers and this should eliminate the misuse of the disabled parking bays.

We are pleased to have achieved such a successful outcome without the need of using legal action. Proof indeed that the DDA can be a useful tool in the fight for equal rights. Congratulations as well to the Trust for recognizing the situation and acting on it. However, we will keep an eye on this and other situations. So van drivers beware, park in our spaces at your peril!

## What no ILF (in the north!)

Do you ever wonder why it seems that so few people use the Independent Living Fund?

Set up in 1993, the Independent Living Fund is a trust set up by the government to "help disabled people to live independently" and funds personal care for people who – receive DLA higher rate (care) and (importantly!), receive services from Social Services costing £200 a week or more. This could be direct payments or care services. If you meet these two requirements, you could receive ILF payments for purchasing services.

However!! As you must be receiving £200 of services / direct payments per week, the ILF is discriminating against us in the north. As one hour of assistance is more expensive in the south,

# ... Bit of that

people in the south with fewer hours are more likely to qualify than those of us "up here"!!

It took me a while to realise this, but when I did, I wrote to my MP arguing that ILF should be based on number of hours of support, and NOT the cost. After a year of writing to the appropriate minister, I got nowhere. However the minister then responsible for ILF (Hugh Bayley) did admit in writing that it would be more sensible to base ILF on number of hours!! His civil servants, realising what a gaff their boss had made, took over and sent me lots of e-mails trying to worm out of it.

If you feel your care package would entitle you to ILF if you were in the south, please write to your MP and keep on at him/her!

**Also, did you know ... ?**

I only recently discovered this, but, disabled people can avoid paying VAT on certain items with the Inland Revenue by stating that you require the item because of your disability. Not everything in the shops is exempt, but you can get further details by going to: <http://www.hmce.gov.uk/notices/701-07.htm> ... or ringing Customs & Excise on 08450 1090 000

## DDA Investigation

Channel 4 are developing a project to investigate the shortcomings of the Disability Discrimination Act. Their researchers are looking for evidence for their investigations. This will focus on 2 main areas:

1) They would like to talk to people who feel they have been

discriminated against in the workplace or at interview because of a physical or mental disability/impairment. They are particularly interested in speaking to those with an ongoing case, with a view to identifying how the discrimination is manifested by capturing it on film.

2) They would like to hear from people who have experienced severe difficulties or discrimination when using public services, i.e. transport, shops etc. Again, the aim is to film these difficulties.

If you think you might like to talk to Channel 4 about your experiences please contact Choices & Rights' Access Worker, Duncan Edge on 01482 336106.

## Sexual Abuse of Vulnerable People

As part of our campaigning role, we wrote recently to all our local MP's concerning a report issued by MENCAP called "Behind Closed Doors" about the sexual abuse of vulnerable people.

We have had a reply from James Cran MP (Conservative) who sent us a copy of a letter from the Home Office. The Home Office has confirmed that they are considering how to change all the sex offences relating to people with a learning disability and they have had over 700 responses.

They also add that the Government is committed to reforming the law on sex offences and intends to do it when

parliamentary time allows. For those of you who don't care for "Spin speak", this means they'll do it when they can be bothered.

Choices and Rights is not a particular fan of organisations such as MENCAP, who aren't run and controlled by disabled people. However, we think that the abuse of disabled people in residential homes is more widespread than people think and we cannot afford to waste any opportunity to highlight the issues. We are pleased to get a response from Mr Cran, who did at least bother to reply, unlike Elliott Morley (Scunthorpe) who clearly was too busy to respond...

## TACKLING CRIME AND THE FEAR OF CRIME

PROBE LTD in partnership with Hull City Council's Sutton and Bilton Area Committee are launching a new initiative in your area.

The initiative aims to reduce home burglaries by:-

- Improving the security of homes that have been victims of burglaries
- Installing anti-sneak-in and bogus caller packages in the homes of vulnerable residents
- Improving the security of homes identified as high risk by Humberside Police and other agencies

This service will be completely FREE of charge to eligible residents.

For more information contact:-

PROBE LIMITED  
Tel: 715391 - 715392 - 375249

# EUTHANASIA!

## Will it be the death of us?

In May 2001 we received a disturbing letter from Lord Ashbourne, a patron of **ALERT**, an organisation which lobbies against the introduction of euthanasia and includes a number of members of parliament and members of The House of Lords amongst their supporters.

Lord Ashbourne was concerned that, under the proposals for the new Mental Incapacity Bill, it would become easier for medical staff to bring about, or hasten, the deaths of elderly and disabled people deemed to have “no prospect of recovery”.

You may be thinking this does not affect you - think again! The British Medical Association (BMA), in its 1999 Guidance to Doctors, recommended ending the lives “of disabled newborns”. The BMA believes that neither you nor I could possibly grow up to be an adult with “a flourishing life”.

A similar bill to this, the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Bill, has already been passed in Scotland. Lord Ashbourne stated that this bill has been described as “permission for the destruction of life devoid of value”. All this seems to suggest that we have not moved on very far from when, in the nineteen thirties, Adolf Hitler declared disabled people to be “lebensunwertes leben” – **Life Unworthy of Life!**

What this all means is that, if you have to go into hospital, your life will be entirely in the hands of the hospital's Doctors. These Doctors will decide whether or not

to give you life saving treatment. The same hospital Doctors who have been told by the BMA that they should have ended our lives when we were children. And if, like me, you have a permanent impairment, does this mean that we are defined as having “no prospect of recovery”?

You may think that I'm just scare-mongering, but remember Lord Ashbourne believes that, Doctors in Scotland already have permission to destroy “life devoid of value”. And who decides what is a “life devoid of value”? Yes, it's those hospital Doctors again!

I don't know if this is worrying you yet, but it certainly had me worried. Worried enough to write on behalf of Choices & Rights members to; Tony Blair, Maria Eagle MP, the Minister for Disabled people, and our five local MPs, Kevin McNamara, Alan Johnson, James Cran, David Davis and, not forgetting our current Deputy Prime Minister and failed car park attendant, John Prescott. (Sorry John, couldn't resist).

My letters have met with various responses. James Cran (Conservative), Alan Davis (Conservative) and Alan Johnson (Labour) have not even bothered to acknowledge receipt of my letter. Tony Blair (Labour) and Maria Eagle (Labour) both referred my letter to the Department of Health (DoH). I received letters from two different DoH staff, both of whom endeavoured to reassure me without actually managing to give

me any reason for feeling reassured. Neither letter addressed the main concern, that hospital Doctors are encouraged by the BMA to make decisions about whether we are worth keeping a live.

John Prescott passed my letter on to Lord Irvine, The Lord Chancellor, who is responsible for the bringing the Mental Incapacity Bill before parliament. He attempted to reassure me by stressing that “euthanasia is and will remain illegal and that any action on the part of a Doctor or other health professional amounting to euthanasia is and will remain contrary to the law”.

This all sounds re-assuring, however I included with my letter a copy of Dr Rita Pal's report for the British Council of Disabled People, “THE RIGHT TO LIFE: The Truth Behind The White Coat”, which details allegations about the way NHS Doctors have ‘allowed’ elderly and disabled people to die in hospital, rather than give life saving treatment.

There was no comment on this document from either Lord Irvine or the representatives of the DoH.

The one piece of good news in all this is the reply that I received from Kevin McNamara (Labour). He stated: “I share your concern about the insidious campaign towards legitimising euthanasia. I shall, as ever, do my best to speak and vote against it. “

It's nice to know at least one local MP thinks that we are worthy of life!

## When People Look at Me

When people look at me,  
 It's not me that they see.  
 When people look at me,  
 They go by what they see.  
 when people look at me,  
 They see a wheelchair.  
 When people look at me,  
 they ask if I know they're there.  
 When people look at me,  
 They don't know what to do.  
 When people look at me,  
 They think "I'm glad I'm not you".  
 When people look at me,  
 My first impression changes things.  
 When people look at me,  
 My response can change everything

Karl Dean

## Choices and Rights Nominated for Award

For the second year running, Choices and Rights received a nomination for a Community Pioneer Award.

The awards, organised by Hull City Council and CityImage are to promote the work done by the "unsung heroes" of people in the City.

We were very pleased to receive the nomination, but we didn't win (despite a member of Choices and Rights being on the judging panel!)

Congratulations to all the winners, who all well deserved the recognition.

Thanks to whoever nominated us and we will keep trying. We have already written our acceptance speech and it is shorter than Julia Roberts Oscar's speech!

## Git Award

Choices and Rights are pleased to announce the first winner of our "Ignorant and Patronising Git award". It goes to Christopher Chope Conservative MP for Christchurch who said at a fringe meeting of the Conservative Party conference:

"Why should firms be penalised for having to pay slow, handicapped or disabled people the minimum wage"

Choices and Rights say "Why should we pay our taxes for bigoted, patronising and badly informed MP's?" - let's hope Mr. Chope gets the chop soon, preferably around the neck?

## Corruption or just bad betting?

We can exclusively reveal that the Chair of Choices and Rights, Mark Baggley has been spotted handing over money to a leading Hull City Councillor, Danny Brown.

However, before the press starts rewriting their headlines, it should be noted that this is not due to corruption but due to a bet that his beloved football team Man Utd would beat Liverpool.

As Liverpool beat United twice this season (due to offside goals, bribing the referee, etc), the sum of £10 has made it's way to Danny's pockets.

Danny hasn't had a major change of lifestyle yet, but has been heard muttering something about "... winning three cups."

As this is a family newsletter, we cannot publish the full reply from Mark, but it did involve something about "we won the league" and "those slightly fortunate very nice scouse orphans!".

## 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

## STOP PRESS

### BBC DOCUMENTRY

The BBC's Disability Programmes Unit's producing a or BBC2 that will focus on perceptions of disability programme. The documentary will explore the daily lives of disabled people and investigate not just how they see themselves but how non disabled people interact with, perceive and treat individuals who have an impairment. We would love to hear from any out-going people out there about their encounters in the world as a disabled person. If you are interested in being involved in the project, please contact Victoria Taylor on:

**020 8752 6710** or email:  
**victoria.taylor@bbc.co.uk**

# Disability Information Service



Using *local area* data and national data provided 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

Contact Denise Canniffe 10am to 4pm weekdays, or you may leave an answerphone message at all other times.

 - **01482 336106**

Text - **01482 701076**

Fax - **01482 788668**

## Contact Details



### Independent Living

**Tel: 01482 336103**

Sarah Davies

email: [sarah@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk](mailto:sarah@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk)

### Disability Housing Service

**Tel: 01482 336104**

Mark Baggley

email: [MBaggley@habinteg.org.uk](mailto:MBaggley@habinteg.org.uk)

### Peer Support Service

**Tel: 01482 336105**

John Gilling

email: [john@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk](mailto:john@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk)

### Access Work and Audits

**Tel: 01482 336106**

Duncan Edge

email: [duncan@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk](mailto:duncan@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk)

### Disability Equality Training

**Tel: 01482 701628**

Liesel Dickinson

email: [liesel@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk](mailto:liesel@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk)

### Fax & General Enquiries

**01482 788668**

General email: [office@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk](mailto:office@choicesandrights.demon.co.uk)

Website: <http://www.choicesandrights.org.uk/>



#### DISCLAIMER:

The views in Loud and Proud do not necessarily reflect the views of Choices and Rights Disability Coalition.

Choices & Rights Disability Coalition are funded by the National Lottery Charities Board. We are full members of BCODP and affiliated to DIAL UK. Registered Charity No. 3982194