

Loud & Proud

Issue 11 - Summer 2004

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Ready for Action?

Are you sick of not being able to get into your post office? Unable to get in that 'trendy' clothes shop? Can't visit your local leisure centre? Feel you have been turned down for work because you are disabled? Finished from your job because you have become disabled?

Well, from October 2004, that situation should change. The most important part of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) comes into force.

Firstly, the part of the Act that protects disabled people against discrimination at work will be extended to cover small employers' this means those with fewer than 15 staff. This will give disabled people for the first time the same rights at work regardless of the size of the company that they work for.

Secondly, all businesses (including voluntary and council services) that offer services to the public will be required to make

reasonable changes to physical barriers that prevent disabled people accessing their services. There's no rule book that makes every situation clear cut, and things like, the cost of alterations and the size of the business will have to be taken into account.

For example, a small hairdresser's up a flight of stairs probably wouldn't be expected to install a lift or stair lift, but a shop with only one step into it may well be expected to ramp or level the access.

Also, it's not just about wheelchair access. Improved lighting, signage, installing a hearing loop or simply moving furniture to improve access will assist partially sighted or hearing impaired customers.

Even if the premises can't be made accessible, companies will have to look at other ways of delivering their services. For example, visiting the customer at home or taking the products to the till.

The law doesn't mean that from the 1st October 2004 all premises will have to be accessible, but it does mean that businesses should have thought about it and have started to plan what they are going to do. For example, a restaurant that has looked at whether it can install an accessible toilet and is consulting with an architect or access officer would probably be seen as

acceptable. But if they haven't done anything, that probably would be seen as breaking the law.

We believe at Choices and Rights that although the DDA isn't the legislation we wanted, it is important to use it to make it more an accessible world for all of us.

We will all be looking with interest at how the DDA develops and are ready to advise both disabled people and organisations on their legal position. Our partnership with the Disability Rights Commission will really come into fruition in the next year, but most of all, we want to help YOU get your rights met and access to the places and services you want.

Together, we CAN make a difference.

NEED DDA ADVICE?

Contact Choices and Rights on Hull (01482) 788668

Also, the Disability Rights Commission publishes free leaflets including, "How to Make a Claim and a Practical Guide for Small Businesses."

Telephone 08457 622 633 Text phone 08457 622 644

Email: enquiry@drc-gb.org

Website: www.drc-gb.org

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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.

DISCLAIMER:

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

UKDPP

UK Disabled People's Parliament

Readers will remember back in October 2003, two members of Choices and Rights, Mark Baggley and Danny Brown, were appointed to the first ever UK Disabled People's Parliament. (UKDPP).

Due to a combination of lack of funding and the changes at BCODP (see Chief Executive in Shock Move Story on page 12), the UKDPP is on 'hold' until further funding can be found.

Although we welcomed the setting up of the parliament (and it did generate some good media attention about the rights of disabled people), it was clear that it needed a lot more funding than was available.

Members had to pay their own accommodation, transport costs, etc. and this clearly was never going to create a truly dynamic parliament, especially if members had to spend time trying to get their own funding. So what has gone wrong?

Choices and Rights believe the main problem is a lack of funding for BCODP. BCODP is the national organisation of groups run and controlled by disabled people. The difficulty BCODP has is trying to run a national organisation on the same level of funding that many local organisations have. From our own experience of funding locally, it is clear that this is an impossible

task and the BCODP will never be able to compete on an equal basis with SCOPE, RADAR, etc. until it receives core funding from the Government.

In addition, many of the fund



raising initiatives that are run by the Big Seven disability charities aren't compatible with the ethics of organisations led by disabled people.

We can't (and don't want to) organise street collections, sponsored events, door to door collections using negative images of disabled people that tug at the heartstrings, so it does limit our options.

So, in order to retain our pride, ethics and dignity, many organisations have to exist hand to mouth. There's a strange kind of contradiction here, isn't there? We don't know all the answers, but we do know that we need a strong national body that can represent us and work with Government. We also now that it's not the Big Seven that can do that, as they're more keen on Empire building and paying their staff £70,000 a year than addressing our real needs.

To pay or not to pay?

I'm going to start with a confession. For the last 24 years, I have been supporting Scunthorpe United and travelling from Hull to Scunthorpe on a regular basis, and no, that's not my confession!

At the end of last season, I went with a couple of friends to the KC Stadium for the first time. It was fantastic. Great access, great crowds and I was hooked. The opportunity to go there on a regular basis with a bunch of friends, rather than travelling to Scunthorpe on my own was too great and suddenly, I found myself a Hull City supporter! (That's my confession, I'm a turncoat)

choice (if any) where you sit. You may be unable to get to the toilet or get into the bar. But at the KC stadium, it is fully accessible.

You can get car parking, you have a range of places that you can sit, you can get food, get a drink and go to the toilet. The view of the pitch is perfect wherever you sit and all the other function rooms, etc. are also all accessible.

If we really want equality and want the same as everyone else, shouldn't we be paying the same as everyone else? If I go to the cinema, theatre, concert, etc. I don't get in free, so why should I get in free at football?

'free' services is that it makes it very difficult to complain if the service doesn't work or is substandard. The attitude could be 'But it's free, don't be so ungrateful?'. I also believe that people behave more responsibly when they pay for a service. For example, at many Hull City games, I have seen empty disabled car parking spaces not being used as people haven't bothered to turn up or let the disability officer know they aren't attending. This space could have been allocated to someone else for that game who really wants to go. But because it's free, they don't bother.



No doubt many disabled people will think that actually paying to get into football games after so many years of going for nothing would be unfair, outrageous, etc. Hull City may never think of charging because it would be seen as bad publicity. But think of this. There are 400 spaces for disabled people in the stadium. If we were all charged just £10 per game that would work out at £4000 per game or at least £92,000 per season. Even if that money was used to

improve facilities for disabled fans even further, (for example, to employ a full time disabilities officer, to support a disabled football team, etc), shouldn't it be considered?

Let us know what you think.

But here is my dilemma. As a wheelchair user, I am able to get a 'free' season ticket. But why? Often the reason disabled people are given 'free' entry into events, etc. is because the service isn't as accessible or you have little

One of the arguments used is that disabled people are often on low incomes or unemployed. But so are some non disabled people - do they get in free? No.

So why should we?

The other problem I have with

Want to get Involved?

So, you've read the newsletter, maybe you've even used some of our services or think we should do more? Well, why not get involved in the running of the organisation? We are always on the look out for disabled people to become more involved and one of the best ways is to join our Management Committee.

So what does the Management Committee do?

Basically, it ensures that the organisation is working in the way it should, both legally and morally. Below are some of the key tasks that the management committee has to deal with.

Don't be put off, it doesn't mean that you have to understand all of them straight away! We will also provide support and free training if required.

What's in it for me?

Well, we will pay your travel expenses and out of pocket expenses for any duties you carry out for Choices and Rights. But more importantly, it means that you gain experience in a wide range of issues that you find useful for employment, training or just to give you a voice in a leading organisation run by disabled people.

So what do I do if I am interested?

Basically, committee members

are elected each year at our Annual general Meeting (It will be held on 11th November 2004). But, if you are interested, please ring the office and speak to our chair, Mark Baggley. He will be able to discuss it in more detail with you and you may be able to attend a meeting to see how it works.



KEY TASKS FOR THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

FINANCIAL

- Monitoring the budget
- Understanding and approving the accounts
- Managing the financial status of the organisation
- Establishing a funding strategy and assisting the Treasurer
- Looking for opportunities for fundraising and sponsorship

LEGAL

- Maintaining and amending the constitution
- Implementing, monitoring and assessing Coalition policies

including Equal Opportunities, Confidentiality, etc

- Supporting and assisting staff as required
- Ensuing that decisions taken at board meetings, etc are implemented within a reasonable agreed time period
- Contributing to and supporting any disciplinary or grievance process

REPRESENTATION

- Representing the Coalition on external bodies (both voluntary and statutory sector)
- Establishing and contributing to sub committees and advisory groups
- Establishing key public relations
- Listening and representing the views of our members

- Safe guarding the image and values of the Coalition

PUBLICITY

- Writing articles for Loud and Proud newsletter
- Promoting the work of the Coalition including the Centre for Independent
- Living Services

QUALITIES REQUIRED

Willing to attend meetings and accept responsibility for key tasks
Commitment to the values of Choices and Rights

Think you've got what it takes?
Get in touch, we'd love to hear from you!

Sue Beautyman

- Domestic Cleaning
- Shopping
- Pension Collection
- Washing and Ironing
- Companions & Sitters
- Decorating
- General Handyman
- Gardening/Fencing

All carried out by fully trained, police checked staff
and are fully insured to work in your home.

Please call if we can be of
assistance to you

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0800 1380968

Monday - Friday 9:00 -17:00

Disability U.S.A.!

Back in December, sat freezing in the pub one night, I decided a fortnight's holiday somewhere warm would be a good idea. So, in March, three friends and I jetted out to the sunshine coast of Florida, USA (Orlando to be precise)

I intended to go away to Florida and forget about disability issues for two weeks. But I couldn't. When you start going out in the USA and you discover that every restaurant, bar, etc is accessible (complete with loo, sorry John, Can, bathroom, restroom, etc) it sort of changes your perspective.

When you go into massive theme parks and meet disabled people employed all over the place, the different attitudes hit you. Electric and manual wheelchair users, people with learning disabilities, people with restricted growth all working in the service industry, you can't help be envious. When did you last see a disabled person working in a British hotel?

And then there are the rides. Want to do the ET ride, fly over the moon on a 'bike'. No problem and you can stay in your wheelchair. Want to see Arnie destroy a 3D Terminator, drive a motorbike THROUGH a cinema screen and get wet when the donkey out of Shrek spits? No problem.

Oh yeah. Why not visit the Kennedy Space Centre, walk under the rocket that went to the moon, touch a piece of moon rock and take the tour. The tour? Yeah, the tour on one of a whole



load of 53 seater coaches with wheelchair access!! Not forgetting the subtitles available on the exhibitions and did I mention the sign language interpreters at the rock concert?

Yet, probably the biggest difference I noticed wasn't the physical changes, it was attitude. I never felt that people looked away when they saw me in a chair, people didn't look surprised to see you out and about and when people did speak to you, it felt it was on an equal footing.

Ok, I was in a huge tourist area and I am sure that not everything was perfect. But imagine arriving in Blackpool and finding half of the things I have mentioned.

Twenty years ago, I went to the USA and came back determined to improve things for disabled people.

This time, the visit just reinforced my views that we are heading in the right direction, but that we have a long way to go!

By the way, in case you think I spent the fortnight looking for disability issues, I didn't, it just hit me everywhere I went. But, to show that I am not completely sad, I also ate loads of food, watched dolphins, whales, held an alligator and snake, got soaked by a sea lion and managed to buy some really great books, CD's that you can't get in the UK and a Terminator head!

Advice Service 'Pulled'

Most of our members will be aware that Hull City Council has withdrawn its £95,000 per year funding for the Disability Rights Advisory Service (DRAS), which was based in The Land of Green Ginger, following reports of poor service and that the service did not offer value for money.

It was widely reported at the time that there was no reason for disabled people to be concerned that they will no longer be able to get help and advice in relation to benefits as the council was looking to run its own improved service for less than half the cost.

A joint statement from Dave Longman of DRAS and Ken Foote, corporate director of the council was printed in the Hull Daily Mail which said "Positive

discussions are taking place, and detailed plans are in hand, to ensure an efficient transfer of business".

It added, "There is now a real opportunity to look forward and build on a commitment to deliver improved services."

It would now appear that disabled people cannot refer themselves, and can only be referred to the service by another organisation.

This has left some local disabled people worried and confused about where they can obtain independent benefit advice.

Here's a list of some of the voluntary agencies that you can contact to receive free independent benefits advice:

Age Concern

Free National phone advice line 0800 00 9966

Beverley Area	01482 869181
Hedon Area	01482 891558
Hessle Area	01482 646112
Hull Area	01482 324644
Goole Area	01405 762267

Citizens Advice Bureaux

Bridlington	01262 605660
Drifffield	01377 241630
Goole	01405 762054
Hull	01482 224608
Bransholme	01482 838392
Orchard Park	01482 809292
Pocklington	01759 305231
Withernsea	01964 613745

Impossible Websites!

A DRC investigation finds that many public websites are impossible for disabled people to use.

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) has warned web site owners to improve access to their websites or risk being taken to court.

They warn that swathes of businesses may not be complying with existing equal access laws and that it is 'only a matter of

time' before they faced a legal challenge from disabled consumers.

Of 1000 website studied by the DRC over 80% failed to reach the minimum accessibility standards set by the World Wide Web Consortium.

Currently many disabled people find it impossible to do routine and straightforward online tasks over the internet, such as, book a hotel, open a bank account or buy concert tickets. This means no last minute holidays, no cheaper car insurance or lower rates of interest on credit cards.

The DRC investigation showed that visually impaired people have the most problems as images are not labelled properly which causes problems for text reader software.

The study revealed high levels of ignorance among web developers over both the steps required and the cost of making their website accessible for disabled people.

The DRC is calling for better access guidelines and for web designers to work more with disabled people to overcome the problems.

Advertising in Loud & Proud

Loud & Proud is the newsletter of **Choices and Rights Disability Coalition** and is currently published quarterly.

We publish on a limited budget compared with many glossy publications, but our content is always excellent and our newsletter is read by a great many more people than the number of copies we distribute.

We hope that by securing sponsorship and advertising we can increase the number we print to allow us to reach a great many more people, and if successful, increase the publication to bimonthly or even monthly!

Most of the articles are written by disabled people, for disabled people, with professionals and organisations involved in disability issues often writing articles specifically for the Loud & Proud readership.

We edit as little as possible to give our writers the freedom to speak their minds, and encourage positive thinking about the Social Model ofE disability as well as addressing key points regarding disability issues in the United Kingdom and our local area.

We provide a great variety of content covering many aspects of disability and life in general, and get regular 'Thank You' letters and emails from people who have enjoyed reading Loud & Proud and like the way we say what we feel without pulling any punches.

Advertising and sponsorship of Loud & Proud tells our readers that you are serious about them as people, as well as customers.

We don't accept everyone as a sponsor, you have to show us that you are positive about disability issues - if you are, we want you on board !!

Who gets copies of Loud & Proud:

- Disabled People
- Disability Groups
- Council Offices
- Members of the public
- Parents/Carers
- Social Services
- etc ...

Loud & Proud distribution:

- Hull
- Beverley
- Holderness
- Leeds
- Goole
- Selby
- etc ...

Contact us:

Contact the Choices & Rights office:

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

Tel: 01482 788668
Fax: 01482 788668
Minicom: 01482 788668
E: lp@choicesandrights.org.uk

Advertising Rates

We offer advertising space with four options to suit most budgets.

You decide the level at which you wish to sponsor us by selecting the advertisement size and number of issues you wish to run the advert for.

Your contribution helps to cover the cost of design, publication and distribution for the issue/s that you sponsor.

The newsletter is printed in black and white on 80gms paper, and currently spans 16 pages.

These figures are correct at July 2003, but are subject to change:

Advertising rate per issue:

Size	Cost (£)
Sixth page	20.00
Full column	25.00
Half page	40.00
Full page	75.00

Direct Action Network

Colin Revell is a member of the DAN group, he is the regional representative and a member of Manchester DAN, a new group set up to encourage and promote direct action on disability rights issues in the North of England (including Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire).

Many disabled people within society with hidden-impairments, experience more or equal discrimination to their peers with visible impairments for example, wheelchair-users.

As the Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire, U.K Disabled People's Action Network (DAN) representative, I want to see more local people in the Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire locality to have 'their voices' heard, by society that oppresses their voices, and victimises and blames them, for their own oppression and basic human and civil rights abuses.

It's interesting, that many of the local public authorities have a very poor understanding in practice, in how to implement the

social model of disability, into everyday procedural and practice.

Within the disabled people's movement, especially within DAN, we want to empower disabled people to become more proactive, in and being involved in

make their contributions within the communities.

I have been attending meetings with my disabled peers, in Manchester, to enable direct action to be organised more at regional and local levels, within your communities, instead of these protests always taken place, at National level, where many disabled people feel excluded, from the disabled people movement for various personal, social and economic reasons.

If you want to support me in organising the DAN network of disabled people, within the Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire locality, want more information about Dan's 'FREEOURPEOPLE' campaign or become more involved, in more local, regional, and national non-violent direct action with other disabled people, then email me at:-



informed decisions making processes that impacts on their life's and speaking out towards all the local, national and international politicians and public authorities.

Many disabled people, of all ages and ethnic, religious and cultures are being denied their basic human and civil rights, as individuals to feel included and

colrevs@colrevs.karoo.co.uk , or ring 01482 576572

FREEOURPEOPLE

Kind Regards

Colin Revell, Hull and East Riding DAN representative and neuro diverse disabled people's local, national and international human and civil rights campaigner, educator, advisor and researcher.

Living - Not Existing!

National Conference on Independent Living

**'Living Not Existing'
Thursday 11 November
2004**

**Holiday Inn on the Hull
Marina.**

Following on from our highly successful conference 'Its' Great to Communicate' last year, Choices and Rights Disability Coalition are holding another full day conference for both disabled people and service providers/employers entitled "Living Not Existing" which will look at how disabled people can live independent and dynamic lifestyles using a range of innovative solutions.

The conference venue is wheelchair accessible, communication support (BSL interpreters, lip speakers & Palentypist), PA's and guides will be available and the information will be available in a range of accessible formats. In addition the conference speeches will be displayed in summary with pictures for people with learning difficulties. Car Parking is available.

The conference will be attended by several key speakers including representatives from the National Centre for Independent Living and the Disability Rights Commission.

If you would like to attend this



important event please contact Choices and Rights. If you express a desire to attend you will be sent a program and booking form, which will request details of any particular assistance you require.

Last year's conference was over subscribed and we expect a similar situation again. Please

ensure you express your interest as early as possible so you are not disappointed.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Choices and Rights:

Tel: 01482 788668

Text: 01482 719591

email:office@choicesandrights.org.uk



www.accessible-property.org.uk

The Accessible Property Register
11 Stumperlowe Croft
Sheffield
S10 3QW

Accessible property website launches new service

Specialist property website the Accessible Property Register has introduced a new, free service to complement the property advertising pages launched last year.

'Property Wanted' pages are now available for use by anyone searching for accessible or adapted property. Adverts placed on these pages give the advertiser the option to describe what they are looking for in general terms and also to include detailed information about required access features and adaptations.

"We think we are the first to offer this opportunity on a national basis," said APR director Conrad Hodgkinson. "Not only will property providers be able to see what people want and contact advertisers directly, these adverts help to demonstrate levels of unmet need."

Wheelchair user Alison Hayward from Scunthorpe, and searching for accessible property in Sheffield, is one of the first to use the new service. "I think it's great," she said. "I'm very pleased with the way my advert looks. I've had an offer on my house and need to move quickly. This way, people can see exactly what I'm looking for."

For further information contact:

Conrad Hodgkinson
0114 2307058
Mob: 0774 9119385
conradh@accessible-property.org.uk
www.accessible-property.org.uk

Bit of this ...

Chair Reappointed to the DRC

Bert Massie, the first Chair of the Disability Rights Commission has been re-appointed to the post.

Mr Massie was the former Chief Executive of RADAR and is a board member of Habinteg Housing Association.

His continued appointment means he will be overseeing the effect of the changes to the Disability Discrimination Act that come into being in October 2004.

The next edition of Loud and Proud will feature full details of how this legislation will affect you.

Chief Executive of BCODP in shock move

In a move that shocked the majority of the disability movement, Andy Rickell, former Chief Executive of the British Council of Disabled People (BCODP) has left to take up the post of Director of Diversity of SCOPE.

Rickell has long been a critic of the bigger disability organisations, including Scope for their lack of representation by disabled people and their reluctance to close their segregate schools and residential homes.

His move led one disability campaigner to state "How Can He Sleep at Night". His move is the equivalent of a Labour MP moving to the Conservatives and his

credibility amongst disabled people will have been seriously dented.

Asked about his move, in a quote to Disability Now (funded partly by SCOPE), he agreed that he had criticized SCOPE in the past, but claimed that this was BCODP policy.

No doubt SCOPE will be quietly extremely pleased about poaching one of the leading figures from the disability movement, but whether Rickell will be able to make SCOPE more accountable to disabled people remains to be seen.

Who's the ***** in black?

It may be a familiar chant at many football grounds throughout the season, but for one referee, his disability will be a definite advantage!

Jayson Kiggins is 19 and deaf and has passed his exams to become a football referee.

Although he has got along way to go to reach the Premiership, he thinks that not hearing the chants from the crowd will definitely be a bonus to his concentration. On the other hand, for players who think they can call him what they like, be warned - he has excellent lip reading skills, so budding Roy Keane's better have their back to him when they question his decisions or parentage!

On a more serious point, it's great to see a disabled person in roles like this and just shows that there's nothing disabled people can't do if they want to.

David Blunkett Not Qualified to be Home Secretary?

Choices and Rights were recently asked to take part in a BBC Radio Humberside phone in as a number of listeners had suggested that David Blunkett (who is blind) shouldn't be the Home Secretary as he couldn't view a particular piece of videotape, showing the death of Christopher Alder, a Hull man who died in police custody.

We are not making any comment on the situation involving Mr Alder, but suggesting that Mr Blunkett couldn't do his job because of this one incident would seem ludicrous. Surely, the bench mark should be how much of the job would involve actually being able to 'see' videotape or anything else?

In the Home Secretary's case, we would suggest that this probably amount to less than 1% of his job and that he will have a team of advisors to advise him on all sorts of issues and studying the videotape could easily be done by one of them.

The Home Secretary has to make policy on all sorts of issues including crime, so were those listeners actually suggesting that unless he saw traffic crimes committed, he couldn't introduce polices about them?

On a more general point, this example shows how far disabled people have yet to go to be accepted as capable of doing a wide range of jobs and duties.

For example, back in the

... Bit of that

1980's there was a general perception amongst disabled people that we weren't employed as receptionists or as front line staff as we didn't send the right 'image' out to customers.

Has this perception changed? How many times in the last year, have you seen someone with a visible disability employed in such a position?

I asked this question on a recent training course and out of 45 people, only 2 could say Yes. Yet, the same group when asked how many times they had seen a young woman in the same position, they responded 100%. Makes you think doesn't it?

A Single Equalities Body

Plans to create a single commission to fight all forms of discrimination have been outlined by the government.

The government has pledged to make Britain a fairer place to live with a new commission for equality and human rights.

The new body will replace three existing commissions – for racial equality, disability discrimination and equal opportunities, and could be in place within two years.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission will also oversee laws to stamp out other types of discrimination such as ageism, discrimination over religion or sexual orientation.

But the plans for the major shake up in equality remains controversial – with some

campaigners warning that it may lead to minority groups being neglected. Do you think the new commission can succeed? Choices and Rights would like to hear your views.

Available soon on the High Street – NHS Digital Hearing Aids.

The government plans to offer faster and more convenient NHS hearing tests and digital hearing aids at selected High Street stores.

Under a major new government contract announced on 13 October 2003 deaf and hard of hearing people will be able to have NHS hearing test and get high quality NHS digital hearing aids fitted at selected high street stores. This radical new move will help to cut down the lengthy waiting times that some people currently face and will provide convenient access for hearing tests and fitting of digital hearing aids.

This new public private partnership has been pioneered under the modernising hearing services (MHAS) programme. Negotiations have taken place with hearing aid manufacturers to introduce moderate power hearing aids with advanced features at a reduced cost of just over £65 each.

The MHAS website: www.mhas.info includes a list of audiology services already modernised.

Need some fashion tips?

Many disabled people find it difficult to wear the latest fashions, etc or just have difficulty in getting the right "look".

Many clothes aren't that suitable for wheelchair users and buying clothes can become no fun when you can't get in the changing room or can't even reach the shelves!

We've recently come across a web site that might help all of us to have a bit more fashion sense (if you want it!)

Tiffney Carlson is an American wheelchair user and has set up a web site that can offer some helpful tips.

BeautyAbility.com has tips on fashion for both men and women and she has also written a book called "Wheelchair fashion 101".

The site isn't just for wheelchair users though, and has a helpful page where you can leave your own tips and read about others.

So, if you want to give yourself a make over or turn into the next Kate Moss, why not visit Tiffney's site at

www.beautyability.com

Have Your Say!

If you have any short stories, articles of general interest, poems, rants and raves, or anything else you'd like to see as a feature in Loud & Proud, please email it to us at:

lp@choicesandrights.org.uk

Goodbye Liesel

Liesel Dickinson, our Disability Equality Trainer has left Choices and Rights after 7 years in our employment.

Liesel was our first full time worker, originally employed as our Information Worker and she was instrumental in getting the Coalition established into the organisation it has become.

When she first started, she became the “face” of the organisation, attending meetings and generally raising the profile of Choices and Rights.

I remember interviewing Liesel and I knew straight away she was the person I wanted for the job, despite coming from Scunthorpe! (Ok, I used to live there too....)

Initially, Liesel was working from our first office (known as the broom cupboard!) at Centre 88, but then we got the opportunity to move to the Muriel Wilson Centre. Liesel became the Independent Living Scheme Co-ordinator and I worked alongside her for the first time as Habinteg’s Disability Housing Co-ordinator. I’ll never forget the first day we turned up at the Centre to enter our room and find nothing in it apart from a carpet and a phone!

From such small beginnings we started to work together and

then the rest of the team came along to make it where it is today, with a Centre for Independent Living and office furniture! There is no doubt that both the Coalition and Liesel have come a long way since her initial interview and she has been a key part of that development.

However, there is another side to Liesel that we have to mention. Her love of musicals (particularly the Sound of Music as one of the characters has the same name), her incredibly fat cat (honestly, it looks

like Buddha), her commitment to positive thinking (not easy to keep up, working in an office of cynics!) and her complete inability to explain the offside law!

Joking aside, Liesel has been an excellent worker for the Coalition and we all wish her well as she moves to her new job,

working on equality issues in South Yorkshire. And in case anyone there doesn’t know how to pronounce her name, it’s Liesel, sounds like diesel!



2004 Baywatch Survey

The 2004 baywatch survey, which was carried out during January 2004, shows that over 1 in 5 disabled parking bays are being abused by non disabled drivers, despite efforts to stop this abuse happening.

The survey was carried out at over 800 supermarkets in the UK and shows that over the past year the proportion of bays being abused rose from 18.5% to 21%.

Disabled shoppers also found that they were unable to park in allocated disabled parking bays at 37% of supermarkets.

Fortunately, in an amendment to the Traffic Management Bill, new powers are to be given to the police and parking enforcement officers in a government initiative to crack

down on the illegal use of disabled parking spaces and of blue badges.

Announcing the news, Transport Minister Tony McNulty said "We need to ensure that parking spaces that are meant for people with limited mobility are available to them. Abuse of the scheme by those who are not entitled to its concessions undermines its credibility.

Those misusing the badges will be more likely to think twice as they could be fined up to £1,000 on conviction."

The baywatch survey takes place annually and Choices and Rights Disability Coalition regularly take part in the survey.

If you would like to volunteer to take part in a future survey please contact Choices and Rights by any of the means listed on the back page.

New law for private hire cabs carrying assistance dogs.

The Private Hire Vehicles Act 2002 (Carriage of Guide Dogs etc) finally brings the regulations for Private Hire Vehicles into line with those that already existed for taxis.

This act makes it illegal for private hire cabs to refuse to carry an assistance dog accompanied by its owner unless the driver has obtained an exemption certificate on medical grounds.

Assistance dogs must be carried FREE OF CHARGE and should travel in the passenger footwell and NOT, as one driver stipulated, be shut in the boot.

Hearing Dogs for Deaf People worked closely with Guide Dogs for the Blind in fighting to get this legislation passed on behalf of fellow Assistance Dogs UK members.

Throughout the bill, the wording refers to "guide dogs, hearing dogs

and other assistance dogs".

The new act came into force on 31 December 2003 and was enforceable from 31 March 2004. Failure to comply with these new duties is an offence and, on conviction, drivers are liable to a fine of up to £1000.

If you experience this type of discrimination, contact the local licensing authority who are responsible for the enforcement of these new duties.

A new booklet aimed at helping all disabled people, understand their new rights in respect of private hire vehicles has been produced. The booklet entitled Making Private Hire Services more Accessible to Disabled People – A good practice guide, is available from the Department for Transport's Mobility and Inclusion unit on 020 7944 8021 (Minicom 0200 7944 3277). The guide is available in standard print, large print, Braille, audio cassette and DOS text versions.

How to send us your articles ...

We prefer you to send articles by email or 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 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 and finishes.

Where to send your articles:

Email:

lp@choicesandrights.org.uk

Post:

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

Fax:

01482 719590

STOP PRESS

Speakers Confirmed for 'Living not Existing' conference!

Already confirmed as speakers for the Living not Existing conference are:

- **Mike Donnelly**
Chief Executive
Habinteg Housing Association
- **Frances Hasler**
National Centre for
Independent Living
- **David Morris**
Senior Co-ordinator
Disability Equality Greater
London Authority
- **Baroness Nicky Chapman**

Places are going fast, so please book as soon as possible. **It will sell out!**

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 the office 10am to 4pm weekdays, or you may leave an answerphone message at all other times.

 - **01482 788668**

Text - **01482 719591** Fax - **01482 719590**

Contact Details



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DISCLAIMER:

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