

A VOICE FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

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Loud & Proud

Issue 13 - Spring 2005
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NEW OFFICE SPACE

Hello and welcome to the first Loud and Proud of 2005. We are sorry that it has taken so long since the last edition, but the main problem has been moving to our new offices.

Our old office at the Arthur Richardson Centre had to be vacated when the Centre was taken over by the Ings Road Resource Centre and we looked at a variety of options before we finally got sorted out!

However, although the period before moving was very stressful, now we have got moved to Tiverton House (sounds posh!), both staff and the board of management feel it has been a very positive and good move to make.

We now have two rooms and a ground floor to ourselves. Upstairs, we have the Social Services Sensory Impairment Team (who we worked with at the Arthur Richardson Centre), so there are some friendly faces.

With the benefit of two rooms, we should be able to improve our facilities for



meetings, sub groups etc. and there is the further advantage of a big meeting room across the courtyard.

Our new details and contact information are elsewhere in the newsletter, but please note that our old phone numbers are no longer available and couldn't be redirected due to a mistake by Kingston Communications.

We are also pleased to announce a new service. Thanks to funding from Hull City Council, we now have Denise Canniffe employed as a second Direct Payments

Worker. This will add to the work we have already done around direct payments with adults and will mean that we will now be able to work with young disabled people (under 18) to ensure that they will have a real chance of having an independent, dynamic and hopefully fun lifestyle!

We have lots of exciting plans for 2005, one of which is to make sure the newsletter comes out a little more regularly. So thanks to the new people who have contributed to this issue and keep them coming.

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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.

EAST RIDING COUNCIL RUBBISH?

East Riding Council has recently introduced wheelie bins to improve recycling. I don't know if my experience is the same as other disabled people in East Yorkshire, we would be interested to hear from you!

On receiving a leaflet explaining the changes, I contacted the Customer Care Centre (CCC) in Beverley, explaining that as a wheelchair user I would not be able to push the bins to the front of the property. I was told "OK we'll arrange for someone to 'assess' you" and that it would be collected from its usual storage place. Well, no assessment took place, but week one arrived and the green bin was emptied. Good start, but why tell me I had to be assessed when I clearly didn't?

After a couple of weeks of using the bin I realised it was difficult for me to lift a bag of rubbish that high. A mate who also uses a wheelchair, but lives in Hull, said they have half size bins available in Hull. I rang the CCC again and explained what I wanted. Their first response was "well can't you just use your old bin?" I said "no, I want to recycle, but they need to meet the requirements of the DDA!". This time I was told that as I was a 'special case' (lovely!), they would have to get someone to contact me.

Although I didn't get a phone call or letter, the next problem was when the blue bin (for paper) was due to be emptied. Mine wasn't! Again, I contacted the CCC and was told they would look in to it. I was tempted to

tell them they couldn't look into the bin as it was overflowing with paper, but managed to resist!

The final straw came the following Monday when the green bin was emptied and put back (hooray), but my old bin, which was already

empty and just sat there quietly out of the way had been moved and placed ... get this ... in the middle of my ramp between my drive and the kitchen door!

This led to me to a number of possible conclusions. Either the bin men/women were annoyed at

me complaining and decided to get their own back, who ever moved it had no brain at all or maybe the cat at the end of the close is related to Superman and been practising a super hero dustbin removal!

I ended up having to make a formal complaint to East Riding Council and received a letter saying someone would be in touch within 10 days to discuss my complaint. Well, on day 10 (only just made it East Riding) I did get a call and the guy was fine. But all this effort and time could have been avoided if proper action had been taken on each occasion I called the CCC.

Why does it have to take a formal complaint to get an action or common sense?



NEW DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION BILL FOR 2005

This year should see the introduction of a new Disability Bill, including much needed changes to the definition of disability and extending new rights to disabled people using transport.

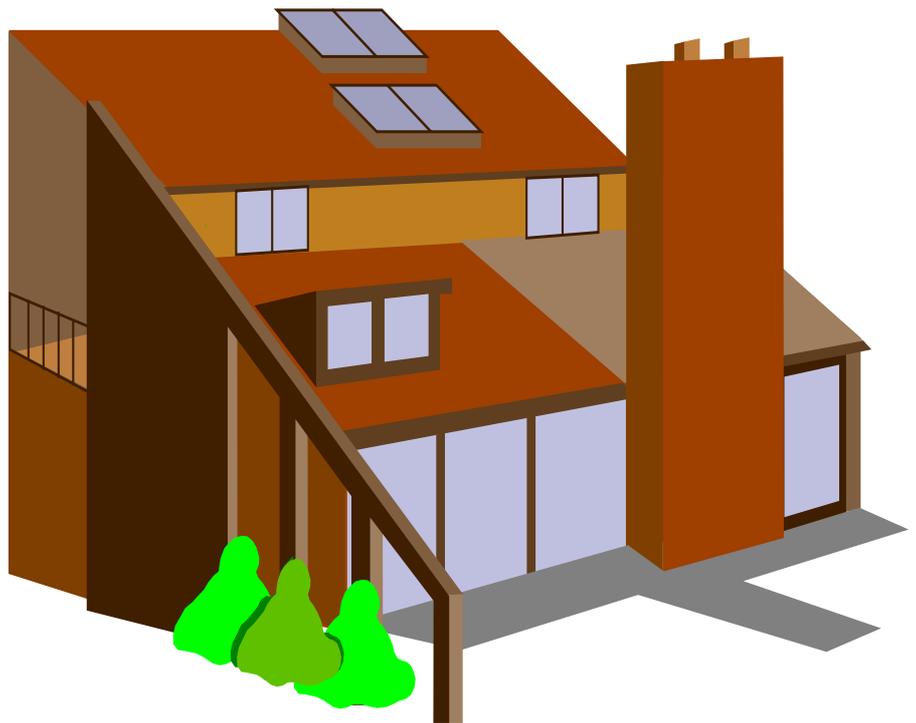
Bert Massie, the Chair of the Disability Rights Commission welcomed the new Bill, but, in voiced his concern that the crisis faced by disabled people needing adaptations to their housing would continue unless urgent measures were included in the new legislation.

The DRC estimates that some 18,000 disabled people are living in unsuitable accommodation because of landlords' refusal to agree to vital adaptations that would ensure that disabled people can live independent lives. The DRC is seeking an amendment to the Bill that would ensure that consent to make adaptations could not be unreasonably refused.

Chairman of the DRC, Bert Massie said: 'We warmly welcome the Government's introduction of the new Bill and look forward to its passage through Parliament. However, housing is a vitally important issue, as thousands of disabled people living in unsuitable accommodation have been refused permission to make essential adaptations to their homes.

The DRC will seek an amendment to the Bill and with it, eliminate the anxiety, stress and hardship caused to disabled people.'

The Disability Discrimination Bill will pave the way for a substantial advance of civil rights for Britain's 10 million disabled people by 2006 and reflects a major step forward in ending



the discrimination disabled people experience when trying to travel in Britain.

Mr.. Massie continued: 'The transport provisions are great news for disabled people and, if implemented by the Government, will close a major loophole in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). The Government has been committed to introducing basic civil rights for disabled people using public transport since the 1997 manifesto so it's been a long journey that is coming to an end. There is much in this Bill that will significantly improve the lives of Britain's 10 million disabled people and I look forward to working with the Government to ensure the Bill becomes law in this session of Parliament.'

Plans outlined in the Bill to remove a major barrier making it difficult for people with mental health impairments to take cases under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) were also welcomed by the DRC.

Many people with mental health impairments had to experience embarrassment, ignominy and stress when bringing cases under the DDA.

In many circumstances they were legally defined as not being covered by the law and denied their rights because their condition was not clinically recognised. The change announced today, which I warmly welcome, will finally end this perverse injustice and ensure that people with mental health problems are granted the same protection under law as other disabled people.

RIDE OF FREEDOM

£5.00 a year* for your own brand of mayhem in Hull

Before becoming a disabled person I was dangerous on two legs, I'm now dangerous on three wheels! After becoming a member of shop mobility (£5.00 for a years membership*), the world is my oyster! Well actually, Hull City Centre is ... but it's a start!

I regularly use the shop mobility scheme and can hire a manual wheelchair or electric scooter to go into town and do my shopping, visit the museums and galleries, as well as being independent to go where I please. How cool is that!

My first experience was quite hair raising and until today I haven't told a soul ... I was bombing about from shop to shop, spending, haggling, playing in lifts and causing huge queues because I blocked isles, doorways and indeed city centre traffic, but the incident in the bank had a major impact on my mental health and general well-being.

Inside the foyer of one of Hull's larger banks based in the city centre there is a cash machine. A very nice looking cash machine it is too, so nice in fact that many people had formed an orderly queue to look at it. On my flashy Porsche-Red electric scooter, I joined the orderly queue.

There were about 10 or more people in front of me (pretending to be drawing cash out of the machine), and the queue soon grew behind me. Behind the last person in the queue was a set of electric doors which lead out onto the street. So here we all are 18 or so perfect strangers communed in fellowship on a joint mission, to get to the all accommodating and friendly cash machine in a small foyer of the bank.

I edged closer and closer to the front of the queue, and was getting rather excited that I would soon have a grubby tenner in my hand to go and have a ball with in the pound shop.

There were about two people in front of me, when I suddenly realised I was holding the wrong cash card in my hand needed for this machine. With that I opened my bag, its handle, double wrapped around the handle bars to rummage for my other card. Then all hell broke loose; I had somehow got my handbag strap caught on the control lever which threw the scooter into reverse.

By now the queue behind me had got longer and the look of sheer fright and disbelief was the only thing I really missed out on (as I of course was going backwards). They all tried to get out of the way and there were very few options for escape due to the electric doors and confined space.

There were people screaming, swearing and shouting instructions to me as I whizzed round in reverse (had also forgot to turn speed dial down and was going rather too fast for indoors). All I could see was a blur of horrified and some very angry faces whizzing past me as I pinned them up against walls and forced them into fleeing into the street to escape.

I feel very proud of my next achievement; after running over feet, prams and shopping (ever seen a white T-shirt from Next with a lovely pattern of scooter tyre marks diagonally printed across the front? Well I have ... Wonder if I could get myself a job as a fashion designer?) I managed to free the strap from the lever and the whirlwind action ceased.

I looked at the destruction around me. There was squashed fruit, baby's bottle, skid marks on the carpet and people limping about swearing. Others were muttering something about I should be locked up and the key thrown away as I am a danger to

mankind! How rude! Now you see why I need counselling, it was not because I was traumatized by the event, but felt excluded and victimized by a society that does not recognize talent and quick thinking people! Even the silly man that bought a plain white T-shirt from Next did not thank me for giving him a designer look to his newly purchased garment (who wears plain white nowadays anyway? Come on; let's face it, maybe in the days of the blues brothers or Danny Larusso in Grease, but 2005? Oh, Please!).

Anyway, to cut a long story short, after paramedics had finished treating the injured and the bank manager had me escorted off the premises and threatened legal action as well as something about public liability claims or something, I was left alone in the middle of Whitefriargate with my soul destroyed and no one to ask me if I was OK. To add insult to injury I didn't even get to the cash machine, which meant no pound shop!

The moral of this story is that even when the world turns against you, you can still go to shop mobility and borrow a scooter to remain independent. I now work behind the counter as a volunteer in the shop mobility scheme shop (at least they still love me), and will be happy to flash you a big bright happy smile, and tell you how you too can become an elite member of shop mobility, and reclaim your city centre freedom!

Please come in and see me, and as with all our volunteer staff, we will welcome you and assist you all we can - because we care!

Gina Tyler

To contact Shop mobility you can telephone 01482 225686 or call in and see us: Level Two Car Park, Princes Quay, Hull.

* For up to date membership prices and Terms and Conditions, please contact Shop Mobility - Hull.



RESTRICTED GROWTH PROJECT

“The research will provide valuable evidence of the health and social needs of adults with restricted growth”

The Restricted Growth project is a 3-year research study running from May 2004 to April 2007.

It has been made possible by funding from the Community Fund to the Restricted Growth Association (RGA), who in turn have directed the team at Newcastle University – Tom Shakespeare, Michael Wright and Sue Thompson, to carry out the work in close collaboration with the Association and its members.

The project will focus on the life experiences and quality of life of adults of short stature, and will examine health and social needs, identifying in particular areas where needs are currently poorly met or unmet.

The respondents will be drawn from the North East region, Cumbria and West Yorkshire, and the research team will endeavour to reach as many as possible of the population of restricted growth within this area, whether members of the Restricted Growth Association or not, and with particular emphasis on reaching those who may have little contact with services or relevant organisations.

The research team will work closely with the RGA to define the areas on which project work will focus, and to ensure validation of the project process. Respondents will receive a questionnaire and quality of life instrument, and data from these will allow the team to build up a comprehensive picture of the characteristics of the respondent group.

This quantitative data will be complemented by interviews with a smaller sample, which will examine and explore the issues identified in more detail. The team have ensured that measures are in place at every stage of the research process to protect the confidentiality and

anonymity of respondents, and this is a high priority for the project as a whole. No names, addresses or features which could identify a person will be used either during the research process or in the written report.

The research will provide valuable evidence of the health and social needs of adults with restricted growth, and in particular those areas where needs are identified but unmet. These research findings will give a clearer picture of the important issues for people of restricted growth, and enable the RGA and health and social service professionals to develop and improve support and services for people of short stature.

The research team are keen to include as many contributions from people of restricted growth as possible, and aim to include a wide range of views and experiences. This represents a valuable opportunity for people whose voice has rarely been heard to have their say about those issues which are important to them.

For further details about the project please contact:

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Newcastle NE1 4EP
0114 235 6904
sue.thompson@ncl.ac.uk

VIVA LA FRANCE

How one travel company wants you to leave your disability at home!



There I was sat at my desk at work when one of my friends came over and asked me if I wanted to go in a girly weekend to Paris at Easter. Needless to say I jumped at the chance.

Knowing from previous experience the rigmarole I have had to go through when trying to plan a trip, I called the travel company to make some inquiries regarding accessibility. I was told initially that coaches were not accessible but that they would do everything possible to ensure that I had a room which is at the ground floor or that was in a hotel with a lift. After some consultation with my friends and numerous offers from them for assistance with getting on and off the coach we booked it.

"Oh yes" I thought, crepé suzette for breakfast, posh French wine, visions of me stood atop the Eiffel Tower or gazing with awe at the Mona Lisa in the Louvre. Paris would not know what had hit it, and to be fair neither would my credit card nor my husband once he got the bill, but that would have been another story! So the deed was done. We paid our money

and were looking forward to a well earned break.

Two days after booking I came home to find a confirmation letter from the travel company. They stated that they understood I would be taking a wheelchair and (quote);

"I am sure you have given a great deal of thought in selecting your holiday. However, please could I take the opportunity to advise you that as the general guide, clients need to be able to climb a flight of stairs as rooms on the ground floor or rooms near lifts cannot be guaranteed"

Their kind and thoughtful considerations were extended even further when they wanted to point out that; "a reasonable amount of mobility is required to manage some of the excursions and days on this tour are long and can be tiring". Needless to say I was not a happy bunny.

I picked up the phone and called them stating that prior to booking I had disclosed what my needs were prior to deciding whether or not this was the trip for me. I inquired what they meant by "reasonable" and was told that I needed to be able to climb a flight of stairs ... this was *in case of a fire!*

I was very tempted to say that I was an attention seeker and that this would have been a great way of meeting a real-life French fireman. I was also told that this "reasonable" level of mobility would be useful when using public transport. Needless to say my response to that was very polite ... I advised the lady "don't go there!" and educated her about taxis.

I asked whether or not the bus drivers had a portable step to promote access onto the coaches and was told "no". I explained that the toilets on the coaches were not accessible to me and if I needed an impromptu "pit stop" would this be okay? Again I was told that the driver had a schedule to keep and would not appreciate having

to keep stopping for me to use the toilet.

I explained that my request for either a ground floor room or a hotel was not unreasonable, and I took umbrage that as a disabled person the onus was on me to ensure that my needs were met and that I felt their approach was both unhelpful and unsupportive.

I went on to ask whether or not this letter was sent to all of their clients, the response was "the majority". I then rephrased my question and asked whether or not this letter was sent to 100% of their clients. It was at this point I was met with silence. I thanked them very much for putting all this down in writing and advised them that I would be getting in touch with the disability rights commission to discuss this further.

According to the travel company's web site (their booking terms and conditions) no reference was made to special requests in any way shape or form.

The following day I contacted the disability rights commission and was advised that at present there is no duty for accessibility with regard to coaches, even though this is due to change in the future. However it would appear that I have received less favourable treatment as the travel company involved would appear to be placing restrictions on their terms and conditions. Needless to say with the great support of my friends the end result was that we cancelled.

On a positive note, all monies (deposit included) would be refunded. So for all you intrepid travellers ... beware! It would appear that even with the changes brought in an October 2004 we still have a long way to go and a hard battle to fight.

Oh, by the way, does anyone know of any cheap Paris breaks up for grabs?

BACK TO WORK ...

... whether you like it or not!

Alan Johnson, local Hull MP and Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has recently announced the Government's further plans to reduce the amount of disabled people on Incapacity Benefit (IB).

The aim to reduce the amount of people claiming 'sick' is not a new one, although as the Government's own figures confirm that claims are already down by a third since 1997, is there a need to develop mores schemes, as this is surely proof that their existing ideas are already working. (For them at least.) I'm not sure what we should be thinking or doing about these policies.

On one hand the policies seem to lead to people thinking that there are many disabled people leading a life of luxury sat at home with our satellite TV systems, Playstations, brand new Motobility cars, never having to go

out to work and just 'sponge' off the state. Obviously, this is crap! The reality is that many disabled people on Incapacity Benefit, can't work for a variety of reasons; pain, stress, lack of confidence or simply too ill.

On the other hand, there are a lot of people who could work if things were different. For example; if more businesses were accessible; if more disabled people were able to get a decent education (rather than the low level often offered by 'special' schools); better transport so we can actually get out of the house to go to work; and if it was recognised that there is a higher cost of living due to having an impairment and this was taken into account with tax concessions, etc.

We often get calls into the office and hear people say things like "I can't work, I'm in a wheelchair" or "I'm on

sick I've got X condition".

Now I'm not having a go at any individual, but it is true that *just* because you are in a wheelchair or *just* because you have X doesn't mean you can't work?

Interestingly a quick poll of the staff in the CIL office showed some interesting results. One person was told when they were 21 by a Benefits Agency they would "never work" (they have worked full time for a number of years), another one was 'retired' by their previous employer, and a third was also told by another doctor "not to work again!"

So what do you think? Should the Government be trying to get more disabled people off sick and into work? Or are they targeting those people who can't easily fight back?

Let us know your views ...

Tel: 01482 878778

A HEARING DOG'S LIFE

10 things not to do to a Hearing Dog for deaf people ...

As many people may know, Denise Canniffe, our new direct payments worker is deaf and has a hearing dog (a lovely black spaniel) called Jude.

All the staff love having Jude in the office, but we have learnt since working with him and Denise, there are things that you shouldn't do. This is our top ten list.

1. Don't shout "Cats"
2. Don't shout "Squirrels"
3. Don't wear a hat (He

always barks at the very nice man who delivers our stationary and he wears a hat)

4. Don't ask him to call Denise and then not give him a treat



(he hates that!)

5. Don't give him doggie chocolates; he only eats Cadbury's buttons
6. Don't call him a her, he's a boy!
7. Don't ignore him, he REALLY hates that!
8. Don't feed him WHOLE sausage rolls (This is for John Gilling, ok John?)
9. Don't eat Jaffa Cakes, he doesn't like them
10. Don't discriminate against him and Denise. They are allowed in pubs, restaurants, etc. (This means you **The Omelette** and **Molescroft pub!**)

ADVERTISE IN L & P

Competitive advertising to a wide ranging audience

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 of 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 ...

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office@choiceandrights.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. It is also published on the Choices and Rights website in colour.

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

Full page - £75.00

180 mm (W) x 262.5 mm (H)

Full column -

£25.00

59 mm (W) x 262.5 mm (H)

Half page - £40.00

180 mm (W) x 131.25 mm (H)

Sixth page -

£20.00

59 mm (W) x 262.5 mm (H)

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Do you have a disability?
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in Kingston upon Hull and put a smile on your face

Brush up your skills to get a **free** adult qualification in **English** or **maths** that's as good as a GCSE and open the door to employment or a better job.

The message from Campaign for Learning is that people with Level 2 (GCSE standard) number skills earn an average of £8,000 a year more than the rest of the population (DfES Skills for Life survey, 2003).

!! You too could bank on the difference !!

When you register we'll give you a **free** learner kit to get you started
AND

You could win a mini weekend for two in Bruges on P & O Ferries

Classes are held all over Hull at centres that offer a friendly welcome

The first class you attend will show you how good you really are.

Most people don't realise how quickly they could pass a test in English or maths

!! Don't delay !! Call today !!

Tel: 616900

Ask for Pete

your (future): **your** (success): **your** (choice)





The University of Reading

Research Group for Inclusive
Environments

Would you like to help The University of Reading with some interesting research?

If your home was constructed since 2000 please read on

We are looking for owners/occupiers of new homes built since 2000 to take part in a research study for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The idea is to find out how new dwellings can be built to provide improved access and more independent living for the whole population including people with disabilities.

In order to carry out this research, we would like to survey a variety of new house types including:

bungalows, flats, town houses, terraced houses, semi detached and detached houses

We would also like to carry out an interview with a member of the household in order to obtain their views about their dwelling. Ideally we are interested in talking to the following groups of people:

older people, families with young children, households with at least one person with an ambulant disability and households with at least one person with another disability including visual impairment

If you are interested or you have any other relatives or friends who may be interested in getting involved please contact either:

Sue Flanagan

Telephone: 0118 378 6734 Email: s.c.flanagan@reading.ac.uk

Or Susan Gillham

Telephone: 0118 378 6206 Email: s.a.gillham@reading.ac.uk

Research Group for Inclusive Environments
School of Construction Management and Engineering
The University of Reading
Whiteknights
PO Box 219
Reading RG6 6AW

A gift voucher will be given to each volunteer who is interviewed for the research project

BIT OF THIS ...

Own goal for SCOPE!

Despite Scope's attempt to take over as the voice of disabled people, it has been forced to admit that over 50 of its charity shops are inaccessible to disabled people. Only 245 of its 295 shops are physically accessible despite the Disability Discrimination Act requirements of October 2004 that disabled people are not excluded from public venues.

The charity, one of the 'Big 5' disability charities run by non disabled people has vigorously campaigned to ensure that other businesses and service providers comply with the Act.

Choices and Rights don't really feel the need to comment as their actions (or lack of them!) speak louder than words. However we would add, with 295 charity shops in the UK, what the hell do they do with all that money?

Surely, it can't all go on paying their Chief executive and couldn't they use some of it to make there premises accessible?

SCOPE 0 - Disabled People 1

Adam Pearson - a regular reader of Loud and Proud?

In the last edition of Loud and Proud we raised the question of why disabled people don't pay to get into Hull City games. Well, since then we have to ask; does Adam Pearson (Chairman) read Loud and Proud as since October 2004, Hull City have been charging the concession rate to disabled people!

The club appear to have decided that with the changes to the Disability Discrimination Act on the 1st October 2004 that they have to charge. We did write to the club explaining that legally they did not have to do this and that they should certainly not charge for a personal assistant or carer assisting

a disabled person. (They are not charging for assistants)

Our understanding is that the club are looking at a possible registration scheme for disabled supporters and that there will be more details available soon.

Equality is important and we feel that charging disabled people the concession rate to get into one of the best stadiums in the country is pretty fair. However, if Mr. Pearson is a regular reader, could we suggest that a complimentary executive box for Choices and Rights would be perfectly acceptable to us and if you could see your way to providing Delroy Facey's telephone number for our secretary Gina Tyler, she would be eternally grateful.

COME ON YOU TIGERS!

Hull City Council Waste Management Services

Did you know?

- We offer assistance for anyone who has difficulty putting their refuse or recycling containers out for collection. Our operatives will collect and return your bin or box from an agreed collection point.
- We offer assistance with bulky item collections to residents who are unable to put them out for collection.
- We offer smaller wheeled bins for residents who have difficulty handling the large grey refuse bins.
- We offer communal recycling facilities as an alternative to individual boxes and blue bins where appropriate.
- We offer a transcription service to provide refuse collection and recycling information in different languages and Braille.

The Council's Waste Management Department are continually looking

for ways to improve the service we offer. If you have any comments or suggestions that would improve the service you receive, please contact us at:

Tel: **01482 300300**

E-mail: **wastemanagement@hullc.c.gov.uk**

Mail: Customer Services,
Waste Management
Department,
Operations and Public
Services,
Dalton Street,
Hull
HU8 8BB

Communication Problems

Lack of communication awareness for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people costs the NHS over £20 million a year.

This is just one of the conclusions revealed in a major new report. In a national survey of deaf and hard of hearing peoples experiences of health services a stark picture has emerged. The report reveals that 24% of deaf or hard of hearing patients had missed at least one appointment due to poor communication. For 19% of them this had happened on more than five occasions.

Worryingly 42% who visited hospitals in a non-emergency capacity, found it difficult to communicate with NHS staff and over a third had been left unclear about their condition because of communication problems with their GP or Nurse.

Choices and Rights are working with a local Primary Care Trust to find practical solution that will make a difference for little investment. If you have difficulty accessing health services, contact Choices and Rights, as your experiences can help shape local health services in the future.

... BIT OF THAT

The Queens Speech – what does it mean for disabled people?

In the queens speech in November 2004 the Government's plans to create a single commission for equality and human rights was confirmed.

The new agency will be a merger of the commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Disability Rights Commission. However the CRE will delay joining the new body because of current concerns about discrimination against Muslims.

Also announced during the Queen's speech were plans for the Disability Discrimination Bill to be introduced during the next parliament. Under the Bill, transport operators face legal action if they refuse to let disabled people onto buses, trains or planes.

Other aspects of the bill will include widening the definition of disability to include people with HIV and cancer and imposing a new duty on public bodies to promote equality for disabled people.

Independent Police Complaints Commission

Choices and Rights has become a 'Gateway' organisation for the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC).

In order to restore confidence in the police complaints system the Independent Police Complaints Commission is seeking to improve complainant access to the system.

A central element of this is the development of Gateway Organisations - organisations that are familiar with the complaints

system and that are able to advise and support potential complainants through the system.

There are many reasons why a person who has a complaint against the police might prefer to contact a 'gateway' organisation rather than contact the IPCC or Police Force directly. They may have a fear of authority or have a lack or understanding about the procedure they need to follow; they may have a language barrier, or be a disabled person and feel that they would receive more support in making their complaint from an organisation that represents them; or they may be a victim of a crime and feel 'safer' launching their complaint through an organisation with which they are already familiar.

Regardless of the reasons for making a complaint the important thing is that people know that a Gateway structure is in place to assist complainants, because if a person feels unable to or unwilling to have their complaint represented then their views are essentially 'lost' and the process of restoring public confidence in the police and resolving complaints becomes a greater challenge.

If you need to make a complaint against the police and would like to have support to articulate your complaint effectively and navigate the complaints system with greater confidence, please contact Choices and Rights on Tel 01482 878778 or Textphone 01482 370999.

STOP THIEF!

An amazing story featured in the Hull Daily Mail recently, told of the conviction of an 83 year old man in Goole who used his mobility scooter as a getaway vehicle! The man stole books and plant pots (hardly the work of a criminal genius) and was fined £141.15 by magistrates.

No doubt this will add to the fire started by one Liberal Democrat MP who wants mobility scooters to be licensed and a compulsory driving test before we are allowed to own such vehicles. (When there's an equivalent for cyclists, we'll agree, until then no chance!)

Incidentally, the above story was read out by comedian Jack Dee at his recent gig at Hull City Hall. However, he did change one detail and claimed the man was from Bransholme (an area of Hull, he picked on all night...)

Sorry You're Sick

It's been a bit of a rough time for staff at the moment with Denise, John and Mark all having a flu virus. There was one bonus for some though as both Mark and John lost their voices for about a week.

Fortunately, they are better now, but unfortunately, they can talk again, so the office is full of "if City beat Rovers and United lose at Town, then if there is a full moon, City will be promoted!"

On a more serious note, our thoughts and best wishes go to Gina Tyler, our Company Secretary who as I write this has been in hospital for over two weeks. She has been quite ill although I am pleased to say she is slowly getting better. Denise, Jude and Mark paid her a visit at Hull Royal Infirmary and having Jude sat on her bed (he took some persuasion) appeared to cheer he up no end. We hope to see Gina up and about soon.

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: office@choicesandrights.org.uk

DDA - QUICK GUIDE

A quick and simple summary of the Disability Discrimination Act

The first part of the Disability Discrimination Act came into effect in 1996 and it is being rolled out over 20 years or so. This article tells you what rights you currently have, what you'll be getting in the future and when you should be able to get on a bus.

December 1996 - The DDA becomes law, but only parts of the Act come into immediate effect. This includes:

- Employment rights for disabled people who work for organisations with at least 15 employees.
- Employers cannot unreasonably discriminate against disabled people and must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled people are not discriminated against.

The first phase of access to Goods and Services rights comes into effect.

- Disabled people are protected against unreasonable discrimination in getting goods, services and premises; transport is excluded.

December 1998 - The first phase of public transport rights come into effect:

- All new trains and trams must be accessible to disabled people.

October 1999 - The second phase of Goods and Services rights comes into effect. Businesses and organisations must make reasonable changes for disabled people:

- Businesses and organisations must make reasonable changes to any procedures that make it hard for disabled people to use their services.
- Businesses and organisations may have to provide their services in a different way if a physical feature makes it hard for disabled people to use.



- Businesses and organisations may have to provide auxiliary aids (such as Braille text, loop systems or BSL interpreters) to help disabled people use their services.

June 2000 - Disability Rights Commission comes into existence. It operates a help line and supports legal cases.

December 2000 - The second stage of public transport rights come into effect:

- All new public transport buses and coaches must be accessible to disabled people.

March 2001 - New Taxi regulations come into effect:

- All licensed taxis (black cabs) must carry assistance dogs for free. (Taxi drivers who have a medical condition which is substantially aggravated by contact with dogs can apply for an exemption certificate.)

September 2002 - DDA extended to education (not originally in the 1996 Act).

- All schools, colleges and universities must not unreasonably discriminate against disabled adults and children, and must make reasonable adjustments to fit around them.

November 2002 - The part of

the act relating to the carriage of Assistance dogs in licensed taxis was amended to cover all Private Hire Vehicles.

October 2004 - EC anti-discrimination law comes into force. End of small employer exemption in employment. Disabled people in concerns with less than 15 employees protected. Full protection extended to those with HIV, cancer and partial sight. Third and final phase of Goods and Services rights:

- Businesses and organisations may have to remove, alter or find a way around any physical feature that makes it hard for disabled people to use services: e.g.; tube stations with no lift access.

December 2006 - Disability Discrimination Act extended to occupational pensions, group insurance schemes and profit related pay

2015 - 2017 - All public transport *buses* must be accessible.

2020 - All public transport *coaches* must be accessible to disabled people.

If you think you may have a case under the Disability Discrimination Act, and would like advice, please contact us.

FEELING LUCKY?

Why not try the CARE HOME lottery today ...

Where are you reading this edition of Loud and Proud? Are you sitting in your favourite chair, a cup of tea and a pile of biscuits by your side?

Maybe you have a glass of wine, the TV on and your partner sat next to you. Or maybe you are reading it at work in a warm, comfortable office. Wherever you are, you should probably feel grateful that you are not in a residential home based in East Hull.

The Hull Daily Mail has been reporting for a number of weeks now on a trial regarding possible (we have to use that word for legal reasons) abuse against a number of disabled people.

It is alleged that a care worker rubbed a disabled man's face in a pool of urine, and that the same worker shouted at a blind man through a cone (to act like a megaphone) and made him go outside in his underpants. In total, 6 workers are accused of 28 different charges of abuse.

If that isn't bad enough, there is another concern about this case. The judge has decided that the people who have been 'allegedly abused' can be named and therefore each night in the paper, their families and friends can see headlines such as "Stephen's face was rubbed in his own urine". How does this make them feel and why were these 'vulnerable people' allowed to be named? Usually, in cases such as rape the victims are not named, so why are we given the names in this case?

We accept that cases like this don't appear every day. But, we know from experience that many disabled people aren't willing to complain about services that they receive (or don't receive), aren't willing to

challenge when they are discriminated against and even leave employment rather than "make a fuss" about their treatment.

Having a quick count in the Yellow pages there are over 115 residential and nursing homes in Hull and the East Riding. Yeah, I was surprised at the number too!

Now let's say only 1 in 10 people are willing to make a complaint. Let's add the fact that many disabled people (including older people) who are in these places are very vulnerable, probably unable to get out on their own, have little or no access to their money, how likely is it that the true figure of abuse is much higher? How many people do you know in residential homes? Do you know if they are OK?

We will let you know the outcome of the case as it arises. Ideally, I would like to give you the names addresses and phone numbers of the people who are found guilty (if they are).

However, I wouldn't fine them or put them in prison. Quite simply, I'd like to put them in a residential care home and ensure that they are given the same treatment that they have possibly been dishing out to other people for years **for life!**

(It has since been announced that 6 people have been found guilty of abusing disabled people in Bedes View Care Home in East Hull. The six are **Frances Collins (28), Dawn Tuttle (36), John Hewitt (27), Jennifer Lennon (27), Janice Fenn (34)** and **Jacqueline Hewitt (29)**.)

The abuse includes pulling residents hair, pushing, slapping, kicking and hitting residents, feeding them too fast so they nearly choked, and tying one man to a chair. There are many things we could say, but quite simply, **they are scum!**

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. If you don't have access to a computer, handwritten articles are best submitted in BLOCK CAPS 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 native format as we may not be able to access them. We accept 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:

office@choicesandrights.org.uk

Post:

Choices & Rights
Tiverton House
Tiverton Road
Bransholme
Hull
HU7 4DQ

Fax:

01482 370999

STOP PRESS

Job Vacancy

We will shortly be advertising for a new post of Admin Worker (28 hours a week) to support our Direct Payments team. Hopefully, details will be going out with this newsletter, but if not, please check for a separate mail out, check our web site or ring the office on (01482) 878778 for more details. As usual, the vacancy will only be open to disabled people.

Goodbye and Thanks

To Caroline Appleby who has been working with us for the last 9 months, involved in both delivering training and as an admin worker. Unfortunately, funding came to an end for this post and we would like to take this opportunity to thank Caroline for all her hard work. Caroline is also an excellent artist and we hope to see her exhibiting some of her work in Hull soon.

DISCLAIMER:

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

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 sorts of topic 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 leave an answerphone message at all other times:

 - **01482 878778**

Text: 01482 370986 - Fax: 01482 370999

Contact Details

Tel: 01482 878778

Fax: 01482 370999

Textphone: 01482 370986



Email

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 John Gilling john@choicesandrights.org.uk
 Duncan Edge duncan@choicesandrights.org.uk

Website

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

Disability Housing Service

Tel: 01482 370983
 Mark Baggley MBaggley@habinteg.org.uk