

**A VOICE FOR DISABLED PEOPLE**

- At a glance:**
- (2) Family Needs
  - (4) Reality TV Stars
  - (6) Patient Passports
  - (8) Disability Equality Duty

- (10) Year of Equal Opps
- (12) Don't Mess With Us!
- (16) Bit of this ...
- (17) ... Bit of that
- (18) Crippendales
- (19) AGM

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# Loud & Proud

Issue 17 - Winter 2006

## ROUNDTHEBACK!

We want your help to make No. 10 Downing Street accessible for wheelchair users.

The current Government has introduced a number of amendments to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to protect discrimination against disabled people.

One of the most potentially effective amendments has been the inclusion that 'From 1 October 2004 service providers may have to make other "reasonable adjustments" in relation to the physical features of their premises to overcome physical barriers to access.'

Many businesses, local authorities, etc. have already adjusted their premises by installing ramps, altering buildings, etc., but it appears that the Government is not willing to follow its own rules.

Inside Housing magazine reported that disabled visitors to No. 10 have to go round to a back entrance, take a lift upstairs and the room then opens out into Leo Blair's nursery!

We want 5000+ people to sign this petition to underline the fact that the Government needs to follow its own legislation, and that by the simple act of ramping No. 10 would show in an iconic way, this country's support of rights for disabled people.

Once the petition is big enough we'll look to present it outside No. 10 and hopefully make the Government act.

Please get your family and friends to sign the petition



sheet enclosed with this issue and return it to the Choices and Rights. Let's make sure Leo can sleep without interruption!

"I think this is a splendid idea." Alan Johnson, MP, Secretary of State for Education and Skills

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If you have any comments/suggestions for **Loud & Proud**, please let us know.

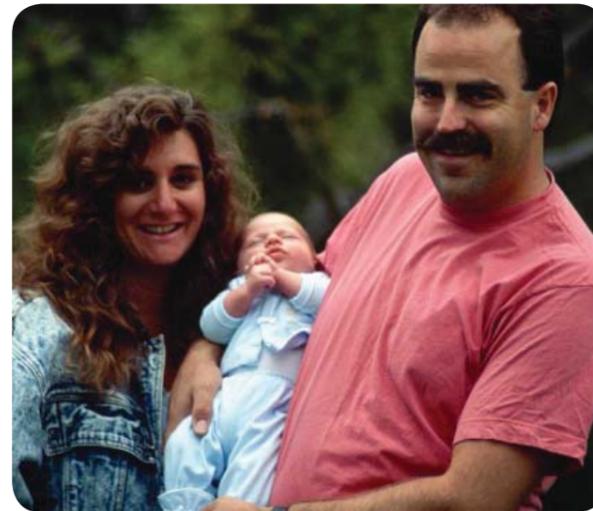
We'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to this issue of Loud & Proud.

# FAMILY NEEDS NOT BEING MET

## The needs of families of disabled children are not being met.

The needs of families with disabled children remain largely unmet, according to a report recently published by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC).

The DRC found that the UK has a growing number of disabled children, currently estimated as being around 770,000. The DRC is urging the Government to help disabled parents and parents of disabled children. Chair of the DRC, Bert Massie, said "All too often flexible working is not on offer and child-care for a disabled child



is either prohibitively expensive or non-existent" and he went on to say that without a government wide strategy to tackle these issues disabled people will be left behind.

Social policy experts from the University of York argue in a recent edition of the British Medical Journal (BMJ) that despite disabled people having high social and economic needs, few existing steps are effective in meeting them.

As well as state benefits failing to meet the economic demands of bringing up a disabled child, the report argues that parents of disabled children have higher levels of stress and lower levels of wellbeing than parents with non-disabled children, and according to

the study, many of these parents would like to receive help to deal with the sources of stress but do not receive it.

Writing in the BMJ, the researchers argue that NHS primary care trusts (PCTs) have a key role to play in helping to reduce the stress levels of these parents.

"They can ensure that workers are aware of the needs of disabled children and their families. They can make sure that families are offered a key worker, that families' needs are assessed (by asking questions about the child's sleep patterns, housing problems, and parents' levels of stress, for example), and that appropriate interventions are available in their local area".

PCTs, the researchers added, could also help to promote inter-agency work for disabled children and place their needs at the centre of the agendas of children's trusts.

## EQUALITY

Commission for Equality and Human Rights Chief admits his ignorance over new disability equality duty.

The newly-appointed head of the equalities commission has admitted he does not know enough about the disability equality duty which comes into force in December 2006.

When pressed at a Commission for Equality and Human Rights fringe event

about how the commission will use the Disability Equality Duty to achieve equality for disabled people Mr Phillips replied "I'm not sure I can say anything definitive about the way I think the specific duty ought to be used, simply because I don't know enough about it."

Mr Phillips, who is currently chair of the commission for Racial Equality has been criticised by several key disability figurers since his appointment as the chair of the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights.

His comments will do little to reassure those who are concerned that disability equality issues will get lost in the new commission.

However, Mr Phillips responded by saying it was "rubbish for the head of an organisation to pretend to be an expert about everything", and he would use "every legit tool" in the cause of equality.

The commission will merge the commissions for disability, race equality and gender.

# DISABLED STARS OF REALITY TV

Over recent months, disabled people seem to have become more prominent on TV. We've had Pete on Big Brother, Kerry on the X Factor *and* Beyond Boundaries, but are the things they do and the images they provide helpful to the rest of us?

## Big Brother

Pete entered the Big Brother house as the first house-mate who has openly acknowledged he has a disability. He has Tourette's and this demonstrated itself more often with involuntary tics, noises and facial expressions as well as uttering "wankers!" often at inappropriate moments. (Although at times it appeared very appropriate!).

Pete says he went in there to make people more aware of Tourette's and this was certainly successful.

The press initially were very concerned about Channel's 4 alleged "exploitation" of a "vulnerable" disabled person, but as the programme continued, the press loved him. More interestingly, the Tourette's Society were very negative about Pete being included, but their attitude changed as he continued and, of course, eventually won!

Pete may have not appeared to have been an "average" disabled person, (as well as being very extrovert, he was the lead singer of a rock band), but there is no doubt that he had a positive effect on the image of disability. The house-mates quickly accepted his disability, nearly every female house-mate fancied him, and the stories in the paper by ex-partner's always showed him as a very sexy, sensual person. A sexy disabled person, whatever next!

Although Pete's disability was maybe an "easy" one for the Big Brother house to deal with (for example, a wheelchair user would have been more challenging in terms of access to the house and the activities, or a deaf person in terms of communication), there is no doubt that Pete certainly did disabled people no harm and his success may encourage Channel 4 to include more disabled people in the future.

Why not apply for the next series?

## X-Factor

X-Factor has had disabled people as contestants before, but few have got through to the final stages. This year Kerry, a wheelchair user, got through. The show seemed to include more about the contestants tragic, sad, backgrounds (a young man caring for his disabled mum, a young woman who had lost her mum recently due to cancer) and it seemed to take away from the idea of a "talent" show and encouraged us to vote for those who most "deserve" it.

It also allowed the programme to focus on Kerry's story early on (she had become disabled due to a car accident) and we were usually reminded that she had "come through a lot" to be here. In the early stages, the judges said they were judging her simply on her ability and nothing else, but this would never have been mentioned to any other candidate, so why mention it?

Amazingly, despite the amount of money that goes into making a programme such as the X-Factor, in one round they didn't have an accessible venue and Kerry was lifted on

and off the stage and out of the room via steps - in her wheelchair!

During the first week of live finals a ramp was available for everyone, but it was abandoned for future weeks and Kerry came on from the side as the other contestants came down the more "grand" entrance.

She was singing in her wheelchair in the first week, the following two weeks she was on a high stool with no sign of the chair, but was back in her chair at the end during the voting. Whether this was due to the song, or an idea to get rid of the chair, I am not sure!

Although Kerry was a good singer, Simon Cowell said a number of times that she was a good "hotel singer", for somewhere like Luton rather than Las Vegas!

In the end Louis Walsh had the deciding vote between Kerry and Ash (a young man with a good voice who had fluffed a couple of lines in his song). Louis often seems to go for the sympathy vote, but he had no hesitation in kicking Kerry out as he thought Ash had more potential to go further.

Again, I thought Kerry's inclusion was a good thing for disabled people. It showed her as a talented singer, a mum, and the papers featured further evidence of disabled people being sexy as they revealed details of an affair she'd had.

On the down side, I think the show could work harder on the access issues and needs to move away from the "tragic" stories, although this wasn't exclusive to Kerry.

You can judge Kerry's singing ability for yourself. The contestants are going on tour next year and will be at Sheffield Arena.

## Beyond Boundaries

Beyond Boundaries is the only one of the three programmes that specifically recruited disabled people.

The programme, back for a second series on BBC 2, got a group of disabled people together for a "trek" across parts of Africa.

With very challenging terrain and conditions, it was certainly not for those without incredible stamina. Long distances were walked/wheeled each day. Specially adapted wheelchairs were available to cope with different terrains, (from desert to rapids!) The group were all very different but sadly never seemed to bond, and the programme featured many instances of people doubting the other's abilities and limitations.

For example, if someone couldn't walk quick enough they were deemed selfish, slowing the group down, and not working hard enough. Three people had to quit due to various medical issues during the trip, but I think the overall impression that people would have of disabled people, is that we are intolerant, selfish and argumentative!

How much of this was down to editing, we will never know, but there was no evidence shown of the group getting together before the trip, surely something that should happen to any group intending such a difficult journey?

I thought this was a shame as the idea of Beyond Boundaries is a good one. However, it's not a programme I would volunteer for unless they do a series featuring an expedition around 5 star hotels!

# PATIENT PASSPORTS - A GOOD IDEA?

## Patient passports, memory loss, and the use of ID cards.

At a recent conference for people with memory loss, run by the Alzheimers Disease Society two new ideas were put forward to assist people with memory loss and learning disability.

The idea of a passport for people with learning disability is being trailed by Community Health Services in the Hull area. The passport takes the form of a small paper document which the disabled person carries with them when they go into hospital, and is available at the person's bedside for nursing staff to read.

The passport will only contain simple information about a person, but might include quite ordinary details such as what might be difficult for them, and the sort of

things they need help with.

It was anticipated by health services staff piloting the scheme in the Hull area that the passport should be about softening the experience of being in hospital, and trying to make sure people's needs are not overlooked. This might mean including on the passport details about what you like to drink, or what your interests are.

Overall the idea was given a warm welcome at the conference. It



was felt that when there are pressures on nursing staff it was useful for them to have some basic information about a patient which was in a readily accessible format.

It was overall viewed as being something that might be useful for anybody going into hospital.

Another aid to living introduced at the conference was an identity card which could be used by a disabled person with memory problems.

The delegate who introduced the idea had dementia, and one of his difficulties is with money when he goes into shops. He said that when he told shop assistants about his memory problems he had found

them to be very helpful.

This was a more controversial innovation, because of the fear that telling essentially strangers that you had memory problems could lead to the disabled person being taken advantage of.

The overall view on this was that it might be something that a disabled person would choose to do, but that it would be very much about personal choice.

Overall it will be interesting to see if either of these ideas develop. It may be the case in the future that we all get patient passports when we visit hospital.

## DOWNING ST PETITION

Thanks to all members who have taken the time and trouble to complete our petition to get a permanent ramp at No 10, but we still need more names!

A copy of the form is enclosed with this edition; please get your friends and family to complete it and to return it to Choices and Rights.

We need at least 500 signatures to make it worthwhile to send to No 10.

## FIRST DIRECT

Anyone who has a First Direct Bank Account (available only on the internet and pretty useful for disabled people who have difficulty getting out) will have been very annoyed by the bank's decision to charge £10 PER MONTH on any account that has under £1500 in it any time. These charges start in February 2007.

Choices and Rights have spoken to First Direct and have discovered that if you have

a second product with them (i.e. insurance, another account, etc) there will be NO £10 charge. This even includes if you open a savings account and have less than £1500 in it.

So, if you don't want to mess around changing your account, it would seem to make sense to open a savings account with a £1 and avoid the charges!

Being charged for having YOUR money in their account stinks anyway, but at least this might reduce the inconvenience for individuals.

What do you think about bank charges - are they too high, or are they fair?

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Guarantees and price comparison are based on the standard domestic usage profile published by energywatch for the medium and high income of the UK. Excludes: Osh membership fee, exclude the gas customer energy independent 24h, 7 days a week and online supply. They apply to direct debit customers. \*Fig 17\* based on the 10 major energy companies who currently supply over 95% of UK households, comparing British Gas, Powergen, Npower, EDF Energy Electricity, Southern and 24/7, Scottish Power and Scottish & Southern Energy.

# DISABILITY EQUALITY DUTY

**“The DED sets out what public bodies must consider in order to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people”**

## **The Disability Equality Duty (DED) comes into force on December 4th 2006, but what does the Duty actually mean?**

The disability equality duty is an important new duty aimed at promoting disability equality across the public sector; for example, police forces, fire services, local and central government, hospitals, schools (although primary schools will not have to publish theirs until December 2007), colleges, universities, and the Crown Prosecution Service.

The DED sets out what public bodies must consider in order to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. This new duty means that public bodies have to look proactively at ways of ensuring that we are treated equally, rather than as a special add-on afterwards.

Under the duty, public bodies must:

- Publish a Disability Equality Scheme (including within it an Action Plan)

- Involve disabled people in producing the Scheme and Action Plan
- Demonstrate that they have taken actions in the Scheme and achieved appropriate outcomes
- Report of Progress
- Review the Scheme and keep it under review.

It's all very well ensuring physical access to buildings and services, but what about the attitudinal barriers disabled people face every day?

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) has done much to promote inclusion and counter prejudice, but until we see a change in the way disabled people are perceived, equality will not be achieved.

This is where the new Disability Equality Duty comes in. It is designed to integrate inclusive thinking into everyday practice in the public sector.

The Disability Discrimination Act has already helped to ensure improved physical access for disabled people in many areas of everyday life, but those making policies and designing services don't always take disabled people into account.

As a key requirement of the Disability Discrimination Act, the DED is about more than making individual adjustments – its aim is to encourage every public body to take time to consider the way it includes disabled people in everything it does – it's about combating prejudice and eliminating harassment, as well as encouraging disabled people to participate in public life.

In preparation for publishing their schemes, public bodies should have carried out impact assessment to analyse how well (or badly!) their current policies cater to the

needs of disabled employees and service users, for example by looking at communication, community involvement and the effectiveness of existing forums of disabled employees or mentoring scheme within the workplace or the classroom.

So how will the Disability



Equality Duty impact upon ordinary disabled people as employees, students or service users?

If Disability Equality schemes and plans have been designed and implemented properly you should notice a more tangible and positive approach to accommodating your needs. You should also become aware of greater employment and personal development opportunities as public bodies develop inclusive practice for the employment, retention and training of disabled staff. Organisations will need to make steps to meet disabled people's needs even if this requires more favourable treatment.

In time, the Disability Equality Duty will hopefully lead to a change in attitudes towards disability as public bodies start to think actively about the principles of disability equality from the outset, rather than just responding to our individual disability related complaints.

Both employees and members of the board of Choices and Rights have been involved in consultancy with a number of public bodies including Hull City Council, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Humberside Police and the Humberside Fire and Rescue Service, to help them produce their schemes.

Choices and Rights welcome your comments on your experiences of local public bodies (both good and bad).

Further information on the Disability Equality Duty can be obtained from the Disability Rights Commission Helpline on 08457 622 633 or visit the web page [www.dotheduty.org](http://www.dotheduty.org)

# EUROPEAN YEAR OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

## 2007 has been designated the "European Year of Equal Opportunities for All".

The new Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) will participate fully in this initiative and act as the central point of contact. Although the commission will not be fully operational until October 2007, in the meantime it will be operating in a transitional form and there will be a team in place to manage the European Year of Equality for All initiatives.

It is expected that the CEHR will work with other organisations to develop a series of events across England, Scotland and

Wales. The exact plans for the "Year" in the UK are still being developed at the moment and will not be determined until the CEHR Commissioners are in place. This means that no decisions have yet been taken on whether the CEHR will fund any individual projects.

The "European Year of Equal Opportunity for All" aims to raise awareness of the benefits of a just, cohesive



Image used with kind permission of Orpheus - www.orpheus.org.uk

society where there is equality of opportunity for everybody regardless of sex, disability, race, faith, religion, sexual orientation or age.

Four core objectives have been set for the Year:

**Rights** – to raise awareness of the right to equality and non-discrimination and the problems of multiple discrimination. The Year aims to make groups that are at risk of discrimination more aware of their rights and of existing

European anti-discrimination legislation.

**Representation** – to stimulate a debate on ways to increase participation of minority and under represented groups in society, in particular groups that are victims of discrimination

**Recognition** – to celebrate diversity and equality, and highlight the positive contribution that people irrespective of their sex, racial and ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, can make to society as a whole, in particular by accentuating the benefits of diversity.

**Respect** – to promote a more cohesive society, and raise awareness of the importance of eliminating stereotypes, prejudice and violence, promoting and dissemination the values that underpin the fight against all forms of discrimination.

## AWARDS

The 40th annual 'People of the Year' Human Rights Awards, organised by Radar, were held on 4th December 2006.

The ceremony recognises individuals and organisations that have made a significant contribution toward the furtherance of the human rights of disabled people.

Over 350 people celebrated the achievements of those working on high profile national and international issues and also individuals that work significantly within their local communities who may often go without recognition.

Kate Nash, Chief Executive of RADAR, said "The calibre of the winners this year shows the great steps that are being taken by those working in the field of disability to make our vision of an equal society a reality".

The awards were supported by key Parliamentarians including the Secretary of State for the Department of Work and Pensions, John Hutton, and Lord Ashley, Chair of the All Party Group on Disability, who both presented awards.

Details of some of the winners:

- **Judges' Award for Achievement by a RADAR member** - Richard Boyd
- **Young Person's Award for Fresh**

**Impact on the Human Rights of Young People** - Dean Rhodes Brandon

• **Achievement in the Furtherance of Human Rights of Disabled People Internationally** - David Constantine

• **Disabled Entrepreneur of the Year**

- Terri Harris

• **Best Portrayal of Lives or Viewpoints of Disabled People on TV** - Truly, Madly, Deeply for Channel 4

• **Enhanced Accessibility Rail Award: Excellent Customer Service for Disabled Passengers** - Hull Trains

• **Enhanced Accessibility Award: Excellent Customer Service for Disabled People** - B&Q plc



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# DON'T MESS WITH US – WE KNOW OUR S\*\*\*

We regularly receive phone calls from non disabled people complaining that we discriminate when our jobs are only open to disabled people, and frequently have to explain that this is a genuine occupational requirement. However the following email really took the biscuit.

**Dear Bigots,**

**Regarding your employment advert on graduate link I was again shocked and disappointed with the cheap craziness that has led you to include the phrase “this post is only open to disabled people” I would like to inform you that in the days of equal rights and equality that an organisation would include such a greasy little clause. Am I to understand that I would not be considered for this post as simply by virtue of being an able bodied adult?**

**If so doesn't this amount to DISCRIMINATION that's right a big word I think you will agree. “An intentional or unintentional act which adversely affects employment opportunities because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, marital status, or national origin, or other factors such as age (under particular laws.) See Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967” Surely this works both ways? what kind of poisonous snake oil are you peddling in that organisation? surely you strive for workplace equality and the rights of disabled people? under your current system as a highly effective professional with high level qualifications and an interest in the welfare and rights of other human beings in society, I am not eligible to apply. If I were to suddenly break my legs or lose my hearing this evening I would then be able to apply. This is bulls\*\*\*. How can your organisation promote this. I am not simply ranting at you, I feel I have a point. Dont worry however I have no intention of**

**taking your ass to court, though I should.**

**Mybe you could start employing only black people to work with BME communities, oh no.... that would be too stupid, as black caribbean issues have f\*\*\* all to do with kosovan/iraqi issues. Much like the problem faced by a chronic asthmatic has as little to do with those of a mentally handicapped or parapalegic individual. Have I highlighted your foolish error? I hope this policy will change. If not I would be tempted to post you a couple of jellyfish. to gain full benefit remove shirt, lather, rinse and repeat.**

After considering ignoring the email and then considering several other responses, most of which are unprintable, I decided on the following tongue in cheek reply

Dear Stephen

Thank you for the email you sent us, objecting to our advert on Graduate Link.

It would appear you are having a bad day! What's up? Results not what you expected? (With grammar and spelling like that, I can't really say that I'm surprised).

As you have quoted employment law at us, I suggest that you look at this more closely. Anti discrimination law does allow for employers to discriminate on certain grounds when recruiting or promoting people for jobs, when a post has a genuine occupational requirement (GOR)

Some examples of when GOR's apply:

- An Asian woman's refuge wants Asian women for the post of staff manager.
- A theatre director may decide that only a black person can convincingly play the part of Dr Martin Luther King
- Specifying that an actor/actress must be of a certain age, for example if you are producing a play which has parts for older or younger characters.

• An organisation of older people may be able to show that it is essential that its chief executive – who will be the public face of the organisation – is of a certain age.

These are some examples where there is a Genuine Occupational Requirement.

Similarly Choices and Rights is what is known as a user led organisation. Its constitution specifies that it is run and controlled by disabled people. All of our funding comes from grant schemes, mostly on the basis of the fact that we are a user led organisation of disabled people as apposed to *an organisation for disabled people*. Many Government white/green papers talk of the need to consult with user led organisations and such organisations are vital to ensuring that views of service users are represented. We believe that disabled people have the right to speak for themselves.

As a graduate I would expect that if you applied a little more thought to the situation, you would appreciate that we are not as stupid and foolish as you seem to imagine us to be.

Further to the above, another essential criterion of the post is understanding and subscribing to the Social Model of Disability. This is one of the ethos of our organisation and one of our core values. You give the example of the problems faced by a chronic asthmatic having little to do with those faced by a paraplegic individual. This demonstrates that you are coming from a Medical Model perspective of disability. If someone's core beliefs are committed to the Social Model of Disability this issue would not arise. I fail to see how someone who can refer to disabled people as handicapped, a term which has been seen as offensive to disabled people for over 15 years, can claim to understand the Social Model of Disability, and therefore even if you were to

break a leg or lose your hearing overnight, it is unlikely that you would be short listed for the post.

Incidentally we regularly see jobs advertised that are open to graduates only? Are you as apposed to these adverts as you are to ours? Often this is indirect discrimination. Many disabled people are highly intelligent but have previously been unable to access graduate courses because of their impairment, and lack of appropriate support within the Education system. They have life skills and other transferable skills which often mean they are just as able to do some of these jobs as graduates are.

Best Regards,

Denise Canniffe

A Bigot at Choices and Rights

Fortunately Stephen took the letter in the spirit it was intended and we later received the following reply.

**Fabulous, thank you for your excellent reply and more importantly well done for taking my communique in the nature it was intended. It is good to know that you are not embittered by my use of the word handicapped. I apologise for my grammar and flimsy accusations, however If I remember the tone in which the message was sent I think you realise that I had no real intention of justifying myself. I wish you all the best in your efforts and will know you have succeeded when I hear of your organisation in my daily life. I have no real rebuttal and as such admit defeat. well done! you know your s\*\*\*, which is more than can be said for some of the halfwitted organisations I work with. As you ask my 'results' were fabulous, though achieved sometime ago.**

**Best wishes, in defeat,  
Your favorite ignoramus**

# ADVERTISE

Competitive advertising to a wide ranging audience

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

We publish on a limited budget, 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, allowing us to reach a great many more people, and to 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.

### Who gets Loud & Proud:

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## Advertising Rates

Choose the level at which you want to sponsor us by selecting your advert size and number of issues you want to run the ad 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 20 pages.

It is also published on the Choices and Rights web site in full colour PDF.

These figures are correct at July 2006, but are subject to change:

### Rate per issue:

Size	Cost (£)
Sixth page	20.00
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# BIT OF THIS ...

## 25 Years on, BCOBP must fight to survive

The British Council of Disabled People, an umbrella group representing 140 organisations of disabled people has changed its name. It will now be known as the UKDPC (United Kingdom Disabled Peoples Council).

The organisation is well known for its campaigning role. However as the organisation celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary its chair, Anne Pridmore warned that it faced a “grim” fight to survive and criticised the government for making repeated requests for help with consultations while turning down three applications for core funding.

## A bit of the other!

We have received a text message from a former member of staff to say that “At last! We have equality. I have just used a WC on a new First train which is so tiny and has such badly located fixtures that it’s inaccessible to non disabled people!”.

If any readers have any other examples where we receive equality purely because a service or building is also not accessible to non disabled people we would like to hear about them.

Blue Badge Abuse - The Local Government Association has recently reported that up to half of all Blue Badges in London are being used illegally. They have estimated that blue badges are now being sold on the black market for up to £500. A recent crackdown by the Audit Commission led to nearly 5,500

badges being cancelled in Manchester, Merseyside and London.

## Disability Rights Commission Influence List

The Disability Rights Commission has recently published the results of their quest to find the disabled people who make a difference across the UK today.

Inevitably the list does not avoid controversy as one of the disabled people listed is Gordon Brown. Gordon Brown lost his vision in one eye apparently in an accident in his youth. He now reads large print, but interestingly does not consider himself to be disabled and nor does he consider that he has ever experienced disability discrimination.

Other people listed include the BBC correspondent Frank Gardiner who was wounded by Al Qaeda terrorists in Saudi Arabia. Other names on the list include Jack Ashley, Labour Member of the House of Lords – Stephen Hawking, Astrophysicist – Alison Lapper, Artist and model for a statue in Trafalgar Square – David Blunkett, politician – Tanni Grey Thompson, Athlete – Bert Massie, Disability Rights Commission chairperson – Peter White, Journalist – Peter Beresford, Academic – Kim Tserkie, Actress starring in Balamory – Clarissa Clarke, campaigner – Stephen Redgrave, Olympic athlete – Simon Weston, campaigner and war veteran – Selwyn Goldsmith, Architect – Anne Begg, Politician – Danny Crates, Paraolympic athlete – Rachel Hurst,

# ... BIT OF THAT

campaigner – Nicola Smith, government tsar – Tom Shakespeare, academic – Caroline Gooding, policy expert – Jane Campbell, campaigner – Ade Adepitan, TV presenter – David Rubain, lawyer – Hilary Lister, sailor.

If you would like to read more about the list there are full profiles and an explanation of the selection process that led to the list being compiled at [www.disabilitynow.org.uk/people/opinion/influence](http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk/people/opinion/influence).

I think there is always the temptation to compile lists of the most influential or greatest pop stars, films, records etc. Any attempt will rouse controversy, but they always provide endless fascination.

Like many of these lists they do not always consider people who are making a significant contribution to the disabled movement, but will never be prominent enough to feature in a list like this one. It also is always interesting that people who do not consider themselves to be disabled are still viewed as making a significant impact for disabled people.

## Winners

With our last edition of Loud and Proud we sent a flyer with a Deaf Awareness Quiz to celebrate Deaf Awareness Week.

We would like to thank all those who entered.

Congratulations go to the winner, Zem Rodaway, who scored 14 out of 15.

We would also like to congratulate Sheila Thompson who came a close second with a score of 13.

We would also like to congratulate the following three people who won a sports watch in a free members/staff and board members draw. The three winners were:

Catherine May Nolan

John Gilling

Zem Rodaway

We hope that they enjoyed their prize and thank them for being involved in Choices and Rights Disability Coalition.

## TV News

Mark Baggley, Denise Canniffe and Jude were recently filmed for BBC Look North. Hull Trains had been nominated for an award for their access for disabled people and the BBC wanted to show what it was like.

Unfortunately, the day didn’t go to plan as when Mark arrived the wheelchair spaces were already booked by someone else, so he wasn’t able to get on! Denise and Jude did get on, but at each station the electronic signs didn’t display what station the train was at until it left the station.

This meant Denise would usually have missed her stop. The programme was still useful as though Hull Trains do generally have good access; it showed how disabled people can’t often be spontaneous and have to plan journeys well in advance.

We would still like to offer congratulations to Hull Trains though as their trains do have much better access for wheelchair users than some.

Send us your articles:

[office@choicesandrights.org.uk](mailto:office@choicesandrights.org.uk)

# CRIPPENDALES ... WHOOAARRR!

## They might not have the legs but they certainly have the B\*\*\*\*!

A group of disabled men have created a new take on the smash hit comedy film - The Full Monty. The boundary breaking documentary film, called The Crippendales in an ironic reference to the risqué all-male cabaret act The Chippendales.

The film follows Hull man Lee Kemp, 34, as he puts together a group of disabled men and gets them to strip at a hen night, in the manner of the hit film The Full Monty.

Lee, a father of one who lives on Hull's Bransholme Estate was a window cleaner before becoming disabled by a motorcycle accident. He now works as a disability representative for Hull City Football Club and was recently runner-up in the Sexiest Man in



Yorkshire competition.

In the film, Lee together with James O'Driscoll, 33, from Kent, Asif Khan, 35, from Hounslow, John Irvine, 42, from Kilmarnock and Andy Latham, 31, from Lancashire, form their own stripping troupe. But is it a gimmick or a serious statement on attitudes to sex and disability?

"There is still a long way to go in reducing myths surrounding sex and disability, but the fact that a film such as this is gaining wide exposure at film festivals shows that societies attitudes are changing for the better. Sometimes laughter is the best way to get a serious message across and hopefully it will help to influence peoples' perceptions of disabled people in a positive way.

The film was launched at the Sheffield Documentary Festival in October.

# SCOOTERS

## Compulsory insurance for scooters welcomed. A report commission by the Department for Transport has made several recommendations which include:

- Improvements to both the advice and training given to potential users when purchasing a vehicle; it is suggested that

the point of sale is the best place for this. It is also recommended that a training programme should be developed with guidance on how to advise purchasers.

- Class 2 and Class 3 Powered Wheelchair and Scooter users should be required to have Third Party insurance.
- Work on devising a simple "fitness to drive" assessment, including an eyesight test, ability to control the vehicle and a measure of cognitive / judgement abilities.
- Current regulations on permitted users should remain, subject to consideration of the issue of cognitive impairment.
- Road Traffic Act sections for "driving

under the influence" and use of mobile phones should apply to Class 2 & 3 vehicles.

The research found there were an estimated 90,000 powered wheelchair and scooter users in the UK, with the number rising. The report said incidents were infrequent, but probably heavily under-reported. Police statistics varied from county to county.

Many mobility charities have welcomed the proposals for users to obtain compulsory third party insurance and it is generally felt that the recommendations are sensible.

If you have an accident and face a claim against you, the cost could be astronomical.

# AGM

Choices and Rights held our new style Annual General Meeting at the Kingston Communications stadium on the 27th November 2006. Normally, the AGM has been held as part of our annual conference, but with the conference moving to the summer, we needed to have a different style.

The AGM was almost a "mini conference" with a direct payments forum and the City Council's Disabled Focus Group also been included as part of the day. This meant as well as over 40 people attending (our best attendance for some years), it meant that a wider group of people met up for some valuable networking and chat.

The AGM included reports from each member of project staff, a viewing of a DVD of last year's conference and elections for the board. As well as re-electing a number of existing board members, two new ones were elected, so congratulations to Wendy Hine and Brian Archibald who we look forward to adding their individual expertise to our organisation.

## Send us your stories ...

If you want to send us an article for publication in Loud & Proud, please either email it ([landp@choicesandrights.org.uk](mailto:landp@choicesandrights.org.uk)), or send it in to the office - address on back page.

## Disability Information Service

Using local 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
- Transport
- Holidays
- Social Issues
- Accommodation
- Direct Payments
- Volunteering • Personal Matters
- Arts & Leisure
- Aids & Equipment
- Sports & interests

10am to 4pm weekdays, or leave an answer phone message at all other times:

 - **01482 878778**

Text: 01482 370986 - Fax: 01482 370999

## Contact Details

### Staff

<b>Denise Canniffe</b>	<b>Access Direct and Direct Payments (Children)</b>
<b>John Gilling</b>	<b>Direct Payments (Adults)</b>
<b>Fiona Rees</b>	<b>Community Care Advice</b>
<b>Mark Baggley</b>	<b>Disability Housing Service</b>



<b>Rachel Carpenter</b>	<b>Administration</b>
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**DISCLAIMER:** The views in Loud and Proud do not necessarily reflect the views of Choices and Rights Disability Coalition.