



# Fife Independent Disability Network Newsletter

Spring  
Edition  
2009

SC 026112

## A letter in response to the failure of the 'Scottish Human Rights Commission' to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.

Professor Alan Miller  
Chairperson  
SHRC  
Optima House  
28 Robertson Street  
Glasgow  
G2 8DU



Dear Sir,

I was disappointed but not surprised when attending a meeting of SHRC in the Rothes Halls, Glenrothes on Thursday March 12 to find that my rights under the DDA as a person with a disability had not been recognised, be it either by omission or ignorance.

Due to inadequate communication support at the meeting I was unable to hear what was being said by the speaker who also stood with her back to an illuminated screen which made it difficult to lip read her. The seating arrangement for the workshops to be carried out later in the meeting was not suitable for a person with a hearing loss, which again would have made it very difficult to participate fully. I was therefore obliged to leave. I cannot name the staff members involved as I was unable to hear their names being announced and they did not wear any name badges to identify themselves.

Your staff does not appear to be aware of their obligations towards me under the Act or indeed their own duties as organisers of the meeting. I wonder actually if indeed they have heard of or read the Act as blame for the situation was put on the staff of the Halls. Blame cannot be put on Rothes Halls as under the Act it is the organiser of the meeting who has the duty.

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*Cont'd overleaf*

## Cont'd

As the welcome on the home page of your web site states:

*"The SHRC has a vision of a modern, outward-looking and fairer Scotland – where social progress is achieved through a rights-based approach, and where human dignity, equality and participation are guaranteed for all."*

You were not outward looking in organising this meeting, and is it a fairer Scotland when a

disabled person has to overcome obvious barriers to be able to be heard?

How can social progress be achieved when such barriers are in place?

My rights under the DDA were ignored, my dignity was not preserved in that I was forced to stand up and make a declaration, and I was not treated equally never mind more favourably as the Act allows, and participation was certainly not guaranteed.

So much for your vision.

You also state that:

*"We will identify and advocate best practice within public authorities, monitor law and policy in Scotland, and, where necessary, recommend changes."*

I ask how you can advocate best practice when you do not practice it yourself and how can you monitor law if you either do not know it or ignore it?

If any changes are to be recommended it is that you yourself as a body get it right first before telling others what to do.

How can you expect people to help you with ideas for your strategic plan when you place such obvious obstacles in their path?

Also if you consult the Act, it should be involvement and not consultation which you should be asking for in this task.

I feel that an explanation and response is due to me and look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Jack Carr

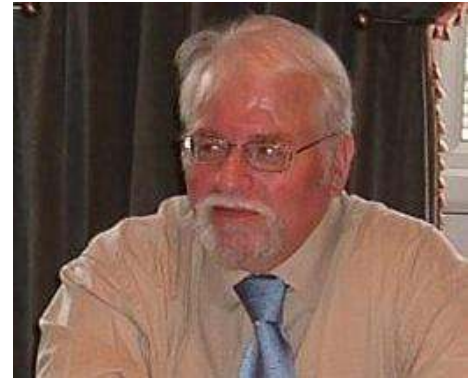
This had a very positive result and they are now very aware of the problems of disabled people and take them in to consideration when holding meetings.

This is an example of action which we ourselves can take to make a difference.

If more people complained more often, more action will be taken and life would be a lot easier for all of us.

## Chairperson's Report

As ever FIDN is busy with work but there are some changes coming that we can do nothing about unless FIDN receives extra funding. This past financial year FIDN have subsidised the services provided through monies raised by over £8,000. The government have set new priorities for councils which will mean changes to the Service Level Agreement which could mean some services we provide will have to be cut but these still are subject to negotiation.



A lot of the work that FIDN performs is in the back ground such as the Access Assessment Group, the disability groups of NHS Fife and Fife Police, we are also involved with Fife Fire Brigade. Last week FIDN had a meeting with Fife Council architects and the project leaders of the new leisure centres of Kirkcaldy and Glenrothes. The meeting was over 4 hours and FIDN had considerable input into the designs and we are waiting for the revised plans coming back, but this was the first of an on going process. There are other committee members involved in the planning for new and refurbished hospitals within Fife. FIDN are also involved with Michael Enston, Executive Director, Performance & Organisational Support, Fife Council in setting up the Equality Group in order that disability is not left behind.

FIDN has several Councillors who are supporting our work and are helping to put FIDN's case to the Council. FIDN are working closely with Fife Elderly Forum on ways in which we can move forward together including sharing a property to reduce costs.

FIDN are doing all of this on a grant equal to the salary of one AP4 worker. FIDN have 1 paid part time worker (18 hrs) and the rest is done by volunteers who contribute over a 100 hrs per week of their time. That is not to under value the work of Muriel MacGregor our office manager, at times she performs miracles with the time that she has.

## FIDN - Disability Awareness Training

James Page and Jack Carr in conjunction with Stagecoach Buses are training drivers on Disability and Deaf Awareness.

If you have any concerns re Stagecoach drivers, please contact Office Manager Muriel on 01592 203993



## **The Scottish Government Central Heating Programme & Warm Deal Grant**

You will be aware from announcements made by Scottish Government Ministers over the previous few months that the current Scottish Government Programmes; Warm Deal and Central Heating Programme, will be replaced from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2009 by the Energy Assistance Package.

From the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2009 the Energy Saving Scotland advice network will be taking all initial enquiries for the new Energy Assistance Package. Scottish Gas will continue to action stage 4 of the new package, which will be the installation of some of the measures.

Referrals for the new Energy Assistance Package should therefore be made to your local Energy Saving Scotland advice centre from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2009 on 0800 512 012. Any requests for literature and information regarding applications to the new Programme should be directed to this telephone number.

All stakeholder enquires relating to the package should be made to:

Energy Saving Trust, 3rd Floor Ocean Point 1, 94 Ocean Drive, Edinburgh EH6 6JH

## **Independent Special Education Advice (Scotland) Scotland's Advocacy For Education**

**PARENTS in DISPUTE regarding the Services and/or Provision for their child/ young person who has ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS**

### **Advocacy Service**

I.S.E.A. Scotland's Independent Special Advocacy Service has been established as direct consequence of new legislation the "Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004". This Act, along with the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 (as amended), governs the education of children and young people with Additional Support Needs, (formerly known as Special Educational Needs).

If parent disagrees with a Local Authority's decision regarding the provision or services to meet their child`s/young person`s Additional Support Needs, there will now be, as a result of the combination of both the old and the new legislation, a number of appeals/systems which can be accessed (see middle page for examples).

### **Advocacy For Education Aims**

- Enable and empower parents to make informed decisions regarding the resources and provision for their child/young person.

- Access the appropriate appeal/system by which parents or a young person can take their case forward.
- Provide free advocacy/representation for parents and young people in order that they will have equality of representation and their human right to a fair hearing upheld.
- Enable children and young people with Additional Support Needs to receive appropriate and effective resources and/or provision in order to reach their full potential.

### **Appeals/Systems Routes**

Parents and young people (if competent) can challenge their Local Authority's decision. There are a number of routes to enable challenges to be made as listed below:-

- **Mediation Service.**
- **Dispute Resolution.**
- **Local Authority Appeal Committee:-**
  - Authority refuses a placing request for a child/ young person with additional support needs but who does not have a Co-ordinated Support Plan.
  - Exclusion from School.
- **Additional Support Needs Tribunals:-**
  - to prepare or not to prepare a Co-ordinated Support Plan.
  - to continue or discontinue a Plan.
  - regarding the timescales of a Plan.
  - the information contained in the Plan.
  - failure of the Authority to review the Plan at the end of 12 months or by regulations.
  - to refuse a request to review the Plan.
  - to refuse a placing request (where a Plan exists, where the intention is to prepare a Plan, and where a plan has been refused and the decision is being appealed).
- **Section 70 Complaint.**
- **Ombudsman Complaint**
- **Disability Discrimination.**
- **Judicial Review**
- **Sheriff Court**

I.S.E.A. (Scotland) Advocacy for Education project is available to advise parents or young people as to the most appropriate route(s) for their particular case.

### **For Further Information**

#### **Advocacy Manager**

164 High Street, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1AY

Tel. No. 0131-454-0144 Fax. No. 0131-454-0144

## FIDN Websites

The Network has three website's at present, Yes that's right 3; [www.fidn.co.uk](http://www.fidn.co.uk), [www.disability.fidn.co.uk](http://www.disability.fidn.co.uk) and [www.fidn.org.uk](http://www.fidn.org.uk) . The reason for this is because I am at present building a new website which uses different and better software. But due to my health not being the greatest (MS), I decided that it would be best to just work on the one website (the new one), but for people to still have access to the information that is on our old website it has been kept online but under a sub-domain name [www.disability.fidn.co.uk](http://www.disability.fidn.co.uk) until the information on it is transferred to the new website which is called [www.fidn.co.uk](http://www.fidn.co.uk).

The new website is the one that is updated now with any new articles we find. Both websites have links to one another so viewers can navigate between them to get the most information out of them. When all the information that is to be transferred from the old website to the new one has been completed the old website will be taken off the internet.

We also have the [www.fidn.org.uk](http://www.fidn.org.uk) website running still, but I am sorry to say I just do not have the time/energy to work on it as well as building up the new website. We are still having a substantial number of pages being viewed on it, but it is not being updated and has not been updated or will be updated for some time to come. I hope eventual to work on it again, but if some one would like to take it on for FIDN please get in touch.

A little bit about the [www.fidn.org.uk](http://www.fidn.org.uk) website for anyone interested in taking it on. [www.fidn.org.uk](http://www.fidn.org.uk) is run on Digital Fife server which provide websites and training for those community based organisations with no previous experience on building a website.

Digital Fife is a Fife community based organisation (funded by Fife Council) for community organisation in Fife. Community organisation can use the templates supplied to promote there organisations to it best advantage. To find out more on Digital Fife go to [www.digitalfife.com/](http://www.digitalfife.com/).

Robert A Hunter

FIDN Web and Newsletter

### FIDN Website

You can find this newsletter and previous newsletters plus lots more information on our website. [www.fidn.co.uk](http://www.fidn.co.uk)

**Please Send in Letters or comment's** that may be of interest to FIDN readers to the FIDN office (address on page 10). Please state for Newsletter!  
**Please note** that this is no guarantee that it will be place in the newsletter.

## Items For Sale

### Renault Traffic Van

Reg 1997

Diesel 62,410 miles

One Owner

Adapted for disabled use with ramp and high roof, the van also has a portable loo and steps with handrail.

Offers Over £1500

Contact number 07786924488

Also

An Horizon Aztec Scooter in immaculate condition. Offers over £400 or both for offers over £1700



### Wheeltec Enigma

Folding Electric PowerChair

Very Good Condition

Contact Helene MacLean 0131 447 3486



**DISCLAIMER: Advertisements of items for sale in this Newsletter are a private matter and FIDN has no responsibility for items offered or sale for any contract or agreement arising from such adverts.**

## A massive leap forward

Pioneering software developed by RNID is set to revolutionise the way people communicate with friends and loved ones by providing real-time text conversation on the PC. TalkByText Home Edition turns a PC with a broadband connection into a fully working textphone, so you can keep in touch with friends and family. It offers users character-by-character real-time text, essential for proper conversation and for people with a hearing loss making calls via a text relay service to hearing people's voice phones. Using it could not be easier: just install the software and follow the on-screen instructions. No complicated configuration or additional costly equipment is needed. RNID's Director of Technology, Guido Gybels, said: "This is a massive leap forward. It gives deaf and hearing people a simple to use, modern solution that allows them to communicate with anyone else over the telephone." It can be bought and downloaded online at [www.ictnid.org.uk/tbthe.html](http://www.ictnid.org.uk/tbthe.html)





## **Locked out of the Disabled Toilet? use a RADAR key**



### **How do I get one?**

Visit FIDN with identification (e.g. Blue Badge). If it's easier for you simply post a cheque along with a photocopy of both sides of your Blue Badge and your return address then we'll send your key directly.



### **Is It only for wheelchair users? NO**

Speak to us for clarification, but you are entitled to use a Radar accessible toilet if you require assistance in toileting, have a visual impairment etc.

**Cost £3.50**

Contact Muriel at FIDN's office. Tel: 01592-203993

### **Highway Help**

The Highway Agency has launched a new Emergency Roadside Telephone, which is designed to be accessible to everyone. There is an inductive coupler in the handset for motorists with a hearing aid, volume control and a text facility for people who are deaf. Access is also being provided, where possible, for wheelchair users. The device is being rolled out over the motorway network in England, and there are plans to install it in Scotland.

For more details, visit  
[www.highways.gov.uk](http://www.highways.gov.uk)

## MSPs approve disabled parking law

**Legislation which will see people fined for wrongly parking in disabled bays has been passed by MSPs.**

The Disabled Persons' Parking Places Bill means anyone using designated spaces without a blue badge faces a fine of up to £60.

The plans were brought to the Scottish Parliament by Dumbarton Labour MSP Jackie Baillie.

The move won cross-party support, but some MSPs raised concern about the costs of implementing the legislation.

The change aims to make it easier for councils to designate bays as disabled.

Currently, 85% of them are not legally enforceable.

The move will also require local authorities to work with the owners and operators of private car parks - such as supermarkets and out of town shopping centres - to negotiate an agreement to make disabled parking places in these car parks enforceable.

Scottish Transport minister Stewart Stevenson said the only deterrent to prevent disabled parking spaces being misused was to make them legally enforceable.

He warned change would not happen overnight, but told MSPs: "This bill will hopefully bring to an end the abuse of disabled parking spaces and bring about a position where it will be seen by the general public as being socially unacceptable to misuse these spaces."

Labour MSP Karen Gillon, standing in for Ms Baillie, said the abuse of parking places was top of the list of what disabled people considered as barriers to getting out and living a life.

"The age of just relying on politeness has ended and the age of enforcement has come," she said.

The Tories' David McLetchie said it was a poor reflection on society that laws were needed to enforce disabled parking rules.

He went on: "Common courtesy and good manners should apply so that we treat people with disabilities with respect and consideration and that parking spaces designated for their exclusive use are not abused by the rest of us."

MSPs heard evidence that the cost of bringing the legislation into force across Scotland, estimated at £1.7m, could cost that for Glasgow and Edinburgh alone.

Lib Dem MSP Jim Tolson also highlighted "wildly varying" estimates of the cost of implementing the plan, adding: "The administrative burden of the bill to local authorities will prove to be significant, especially in the first year."



Taken from the BBC website 28/02/2009

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/7911284.stm>

## **AN APPEAL**

**Unfortunately money doesn't grow on trees.**

**So will you allow FIDN to cut back on services or even close?**

Our membership is steadily growing, meetings are getting bigger, calls to our helpline have increased by 700% over the past few years and therefore our general workload has increased enormously.

Unfortunately in the last eight years funding from Fife Council has not increased other than in line with inflation, and now especially with the credit crunch, things are getting tight, and so in the last year FIDN had to subsidise its services by raising almost £7,000 extra cash by giving talks, presentations and training sessions.

More and more people are asking for our help and advice, not just disabled people themselves, but as we are the recognised experts on disability issues, other organisations and all the statutory bodies in Fife regularly consult with us and involve us in their decision making.



### **Ask yourself:**

Does being a member of FIDN benefit you?

Is the information we provide useful?

Does it help to have our support behind you?

Do you feel FIDN does a good job for disabled people in Fife?

Is there anywhere else you can go to get that specific help or advice?

Is there another organisation working steadfastly on your behalf with the statutory bodies?

Remember that having a disability doesn't mean only those of us with mobility problems, the Disability Discrimination Act define disability as:

*'a physical or mental impairment which has a long term adverse effect on a that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'*

So you see the word *'disabled'* covers a huge range of people including those with a sensory impairment.

We are an independent organisation run by disabled people, working hard on your behalf, so please help us to remain so.

We run a modern office where people with disabilities can come for help or advice; we have a helpline which is being successfully used by more and more people every week.

We maintain a web site full of information and print and distribute a newsletter with the latest info and news.

We provide speakers on important issues at the network meetings, making it possible for you to question them.

We bring the meetings to your area making it easier for you to attend.

We give talks on disability issues and training to other organisations and bodies.

We publish information sheets and help guides.

Although we do work with disabled people, offering help, information and advice, most of our work goes on in the background where we advise others on disability issues and try to make sure that the Disability Discrimination Act is complied with by all statutory bodies and businesses. We are consulted on disability and equality issues by many other organisations too and are constantly involved with Fife Council, NHS Fife, and Fife Police etc.

We are not only working for the present population of disabled people but safeguarding the rights and interests of all disabled people in the future, trying to ensure that they will be able to more fully take part in life, be treated equally and able to maintain more of their independence. Disability doesn't mean inability. Remember that 1 in 4 of the population will become disabled at some time or another in their life and that has an impact not only the disabled person themselves, but on the lives of their family and friends too.

Apart from help and advice given immediately on the phone, some items take longer.

Just a few of our successes:

FIDN were successful in bringing forward the modernisation of Cupar railway station, making it disabled friendly.

We were instrumental in having the pedestrian crossing on Dunnikier Way adapted for visually impaired people.

We were responsible for the fitting of induction loop systems at all reception points in Victoria and Queen Margaret Hospitals.

Stagecoach Buses now have a sign for the use of lip readers on all buses and we regularly train drivers on disability awareness.

A new emergency exit sign for disabled people in all waiting areas in hospital.

We work continually and closely with all the major agencies in Fife.

Who do you think makes sure that new buildings will be disabled friendly in the future, advises NHS Fife on access and new services, is making sure the new Victoria Hospital will be disabled friendly in all ways, and Fife Council on changes in policy and disability issues?

Who do you think keeps disability in the forefront of statutory bodies' agendas?

We in FIDN do all this.

On average our management members attend up to five committee meetings per week, making sure that disability is not forgotten and remains an important issue. Unfortunately all this costs money.

Last year FIDN raised an extra £6,900 to subsidise our services, and as April is the start of the new financial year it is the time when we now have to ask for our members help. If you want us to continue with the work we do on your behalf, we need to raise more funds, and one of the ways we can do this is by asking for a small membership fee. Membership has been free since our inception in 1995, but times have changed.

In order to maintain costs we could also use you and/or your family's physical assistance in many different ways; help in the office, putting up posters, distributing leaflets etc.

If you have time and perhaps a skill to offer, please let us know. As they say 'every little helps'. If you can do some fundraising, that would help too.

Just think how many other people you could be helping by helping us.

## **Perhaps you are unaware of the work we do in the background.**

For your information these are the committees and groups which we are part of:

- Fife Council Access Assessment Group
- Review Group On Fife Council's Access Policy
- Disability Community Advisory Group with Fife Police
- Fife Police Communications Group
- St. Andrews Hospital Working Group
- Safer Communities Task Group
- NHS Fife Communications Group
- NHS Fife Disabilities Group
- Kirkcaldy & Levenmouth Public Partnership Forum
- Kirkcaldy & Levenmouth PPF Reference Group
- Scottish Parliament Cross Party group on Disability
- Scottish Human Rights Commission
- Lead Scotland

## **USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

### **Inclusion Scotland**

Info@inclusionScotland.org  
Tel 0141 887 7058

### **Fife Advocacy**

Tel: 01383 511155

### **Scottish Disability Equality Forum**

Tel: 01786 446456

### **Citizens Advice & Rights Fife**

Tel: 01592 412230

### **NHS/Fife Health Council**

Tel: 0800 587 4008

### **Equality & Human Rights Commission**

Tel: 0845 604 5510

### **FIDN OFFICE CONTACT DETAILS:**

**Muriel MacGregor**

**Fife Independent Disability Network**

**West Bridge Mill**

**Bridge Street**

**Kirkcaldy KY1 1TE**

**Tel: 01592 203993**

**Fax: 01592 203786**

**Text Phone:**

**01592 646885**

**Email: enquiries@fidn.co.uk**

**Website: www.fidn.co.uk**

**Please visit the website for more  
Information.**

**If you have any relevant information  
you'd like to share, please contact the  
Office.**

## **THE BELOW ARE SOME USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS RELATED TO SAFETY**

### **Homecheck**

**Tel: 01592 599599**

### **Fife Fire and Rescue Service**

**Tel: 01333 439497**

### **Fife Constabulary Home Security Help / Advice**

**Tel: 01592 418506**

### **Fife Constabulary Safety Officer (East)**

**Tel: 01334 418745**

### **Trading Standards**

**Tel: 01592 416830**

### **Citizens Advice & Rights Fife**

**Tel: 01334 412845**

### **Home Energy Management Service**

**Tel: 01592 416904**

### **Care and Repair**

**Tel: 01592 631661**

**All articles are presumed to be  
correct, but the Fife Independent  
Disability Network takes no  
responsibility for any inaccuracies  
in articles in this newsletter.**

## **PERCY BILTON CHARITY**

The Percy Bilton Charity is a grant-making trust which funds the following:

- \* Organisations assisting disadvantaged youth, people with disabilities and older people may apply for grants towards capital expenditure.
- \* Social workers may apply on the behalf of individuals who have a disability or mental health problem, or who are over 65, for grants to purchase basic furniture, equipment and clothing.

For more information go to [www.percybiltoncharity.org.uk](http://www.percybiltoncharity.org.uk)

## **INDEPENDENCE AT HOME**

Independence at Home is a national charity that helps improve independence, comfort, safety, dignity and quality of life for people with long-term illness and disability by helping towards the cost of adaptations, equipment or other things that are not available from public funds. During 2008 Independence at Home made grants to 1,250 people. The type of adaptations and equipment funded in the past include the cost of home adaptations for disability, house repairs and other building work; equipment such as specialised powered scooters and wheelchairs to restore a measure of lost mobility; other special equipment for disability such as through-floor lifts and stair lifts, special beds, riser-recliner chairs and other specialised seating, hoists and bath lifts; household goods such as white goods, furniture, flooring and furnishings - where the need for these things was directly related to the person's illness or disability; and help towards the cost of heating their homes across the winter months. In many cases, this included helping people who had been asked to pay a contribution towards the statutory disabled facilities grant. To be eligible to apply an individual will need to be referred to Independence at Home by a social worker; occupational therapist; specialist nurses; disability and health advice workers; or key workers from other major charities. There are no application deadlines.

[www.independenceathome.org.uk/helpforyou.html](http://www.independenceathome.org.uk/helpforyou.html)

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Thanks to Karrie Grant for bringing these Organisation's to our attention.

Karrie Grant  
Policy Officer  
Equality and Diversity  
Performance and Organisation Support  
Fife Council

# Network Meeting in the New Village Hall Balmullo

On 12/03/2009

Some of the People in attendance at the meeting



**Guest Speaker:  
Marion Dye  
Development Worker,  
MS Society Fife MS  
Development Project**

To view more photos and 2 videos taken at the Balmullo Network Meeting on the 12th March 2009 visit our Gallery Page on our website [www.fidn.co.uk](http://www.fidn.co.uk)



**Guest Speaker: Marion Dye  
Development Worker, MS  
Society Fife MS Development  
Project**



**Guest Speaker:  
Eric Walker, from The  
Pension Service**

**Some of the People  
in attendance at the  
meeting**



## Tips on how to protect your hearing

Here are five things you can do to protect your hearing. Please encourage your friends and family to do the same.

1. **Take a five-minute rest** for every hour you listen to your MP3 player to allow your ears to recover.
2. **If you crank up the volume on noisy trains or busy streets**, invest in noise-cancelling or sound-isolating headphones that cut out background noise instead. Even a small change in volume can have a big effect.
3. **Stand away from loud speakers** in pubs, clubs, gigs and concerts.
4. **Take regular breaks from the dance floor** and use chill out areas to give ears a rest from loud music.
5. Ear protection is important so **wear earplugs designed for use in clubs and gigs**, which reduce the volume not the quality of the sound. These are available for the price of a CD.



Your next ipod?

## Want to drive a better deal?

### Are you a Blue Badge Holder?

If you're a blue badge holder you can drive a better deal with Fish Insurance. As the UK's leading disability and Independent Living insurance specialist, we understand disabled drivers needs.

That's why you can enjoy savings of up to 35% and take advantage of car insurance specifically designed for disabled drivers, including wheelchair accessible and specially adapted vehicles.

So if you are disabled or drive for a disabled person, whether the vehicle is modified or not you can put the brakes on costly car insurance!

Up to £500 wheelchairs in transit cover.

Free courtesy car or up to £500 mobility allowance if suitable car is not available.

Up to £200 personal effects cover.

Tel: 0800 432141 Monday-Friday 9.00-5.00.  
[www.Fishinsurance.co.uk](http://www.Fishinsurance.co.uk)

# Disabled Persons

## Get 1 / 3 off rail fares

If you're travelling with a friend they can get the discount too.

**At £18 for a one year card can you afford to be without it? A three year card at £48 is also available**

To find out how to apply see the leaflet 'Rail Travel Made Easy' (available at stations) or contact us on:



Telephone **0845 605 0525**



Email  
**disability@atoc.org**



Textphone **0845 601**

You qualify if you meet any one of the criteria below:

- You receive Attendance Allowance
- You receive Disability Living Allowance (at either the higher or lower rate for getting around or the higher or middle rate for personal care)
- You are registered as having a visual-impairment
- You are registered as deaf or use a hearing aid
- You have epilepsy and have repeated attacks or are currently prohibited from driving because of epilepsy
- You receive severe disablement allowance

Please see [www.railcard.co.uk](http://www.railcard.co.uk) for details.





supporting blind and  
partially sighted people



## Parents/Carers Training Opportunity

Visual Awareness and Learning Disability

**Course Location:** Fife Sensory Impairment Centre, Wilson Avenue, Kirkcaldy

**Course Dates:** Various dates throughout 2009 - 2010

**Course Duration:** 1 day

**Time:** 10.00am - 3.00pm

This course is offered **free of charge**.

A creche may be available on certain dates, if required. Lunch is provided.

Visual Awareness and Learning Disability training provides participants with an introduction to sight loss issues for people who live or work with someone with a learning disability. The training focuses on raising awareness of the prevalence of eye conditions related to specific learning disabilities; the importance of access to



eye health care; the importance of vision to every area of life, e.g. social interaction, mobility, etc and strategies to employ in the development of person-centred support and care plans giving consideration to potential vision difficulties.

To book your place on this 1 day course please contact:

**Janice Bain**

**RNIB Visual Impairment and Learning Disability Services**

**Fife Sensory Impairment Centre**

**Wilson Avenue, Kirkcaldy**

**Fife, KY2 5EF**

**Telephone: 08451 555 555 Ext. 474131 or 01592 583275**

**e-mail: [janice.bain@rnib.org.uk](mailto:janice.bain@rnib.org.uk)**

# Ouch! Shock, Horror.

Big news, readers: this week a disabled person was seen in public doing an actual job that she gets paid to do. Yes, Cerrie Burnell appeared on the CBeebies channel for pre-school children. How lovely ... except it's not.

Eagle-eyed readers may have notice that Cerrie is lacking the lower part of one arm. You would've thought that this was cause for celebration. After all, we read so much about how disabled people are benefit scrounging scum costing the taxpayers loads of money. It is surely refreshing to find at least one of us in gainful employment?



Strange, then, that the headline in this week's Daily Mail was 'One armed presenter is scaring children, say parents'. Really? But surely they can't be scared of the gorgeous Cerrie, who has a similar impairment to Britain's Missing Top Model winner Kelly Knox? Kelly, I seem to remember, was extremely popular with the British public and everyone thought she was beautiful. How can reaction to Cerrie be so different? To make matters worse, this isn't the only such disability over-reaction in the last 7 days. You may've heard that the BBC recently asked its news presenters to read out phone numbers and URLs on News programmes for the benefit of blind and partially sighted viewers who can't read on screen captions.

Good. But the email leaked to the press and there followed allegations of extreme 'political correctness' to the extent that the BBC Head of News was forced to defend his actions. It's not a revolution. The BBC isn't going to start making everyone communicate with the viewing audience in Braille. It's a small adjustment which will make a massive difference to a significant proportion of viewers and no one else will even notice. Get over it.

Part of an article in BBC's **“Ouch It’s a disability thing!”**  
[www.bbc.co.uk/ouch/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/ouch/)

Have a look at this website, you'll find it full of interesting articles and news on disability issues.



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