

Issue 11 – Winter 2010

DISCOVER

*Disability aware lifestyle magazine for
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly*

FREE



**Where's Robin hood when you need
him? Poorest hardest hit by cuts**

**X factor exploits
and excludes**

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Welcome

Welcome to the 11th and latest edition of DISCOVER, coinciding with the end of a year of seemingly contrasting fortunes. On the one hand disabled people are promised greater independence, choice and control especially with the continued development of personal budgets, and Disability Cornwall is now in a position to offer a range of services to both individuals and organisations. Yet on the other, all we seem to hear about are cuts to public services and yet more cuts. Robbing Peter to pay Paul anyone? It's a time of great uncertainty and concern and we attempt to clarify some of the changes that are to come nationally and locally, but at present the axes are still yet to fully fall and we don't know how deep the resulting cuts will be. As always, if you are worried about your own personal situation, our DIAL service is here to support you.

On a lighter note, we are heading towards Christmas and while we try and remember where 2010 actually went, we've got some ideas to beat the yuletide crowds, plenty of tips to keep you warm and well, but at the same time, ask you to spare a thought for the people in our community without their own home.

Cornwall recently played host to some fantastic sporting events and DISCOVER gives you the low down on the surfing competition at the unique Loop Flow Rider and Ross Fisher tells how the Trail Riders Fellowship roared through Cardinham Woods.

People from the Echo Centre sailed the stormy seas around the South West, The Masquerade Ball came to Bodmin, Freddie got pimped and Nathan hung out with lead singer of rock band Iron Maiden. It's all in here and we hope you enjoy the read.

With very best wishes for Christmas and the new year from all the Disability Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Team.

Where's Robin Hood when you need him?

Despite the Prime Minister's assertion 'we are all in this together,' the Coalition Government's public spending cuts are proving to be far from 'progressive'. In fact, it's increasingly clear that it's the poorest, most vulnerable and least vocal in society who will inevitably suffer most as the effect of the cuts is felt.

This is not just the opinion of the whingeing bleeding heart liberals in our society; indeed, many well-respected organisations have petitioned for a rethink on the plans, which the TUC deputy secretary said, 'make the poll tax look as if it was dreamed up by Robin Hood.'

The Fawcett Society was first to strike back with a bid for judicial review, saying the Government should have assessed whether its proposals would increase inequality between men and women. Their analysis demonstrates that 72% of cuts will be met from women's income as opposed to 28% from men's. How? Women live longer and have children, making them more likely to use public services; because women form the majority of public sector employees, remain the lowest paid in society and rely more on top up benefits, such as housing benefit and working tax / child tax credits.

But it's not just women. Remember how the Coalition presented the cuts as 'fair' to everyone, asserting that the richest households would take a 2% hit and the poorest 'only' 1%? Here's an example of how it might work. An individual with a £50,000 income loses £1,000, with an individual on £15,000 losing £150. So far, so fair. But what if we look at this in relative terms? Can a household on £15,000 a year and already struggling, afford to lose £150? Will someone on £50,000 a year 'miss' that income in the same way? For them, perhaps, it might mean an annual holiday to Majorca instead of Florida. For someone on a low income, this is likely to mean less heating, cheaper food and spiralling into even greater debt and despair.

The Fabian Society widened the analysis to take into account cuts to public services, which poorer households are more likely to use. Their report states that when you take these cuts into account, the poorest households will lose 21.7% of their income and the wealthiest just 3.6%.

And what of disabled people? Under the proposals to get more people into work, Demos, the respected think tank, has warned that moving massive numbers of disabled



Image courtesy of skepticalawyer.com.au

people onto Jobseekers Allowance, which is one of the lowest value benefits at £51.85 a week for an individual under 25, and £65.45 for over 25's, will see 3.5 million disabled people miss out on £9.2bn in support by 2015.

With the wholesale reassessment of those in receipt of incapacity benefits poised to launch, it seems strange the government is willing to trust GPs with the £80bn NHS budget, but doesn't trust them to identify whether their own patients are too sick to work. Perhaps it would be better to spend the billions 'reforming' the system by putting more effective support mechanisms in place instead, to ensure disabled people can reach their full social and economic potential? One wonders if the Government is really thinking this through, because all the research on which the Choice and Control Agenda is based, identifies that those who feel excluded from mainstream society end up costing more as they get stuck in the endless revolving door of chronic and critical service-provision. But of course, there's no guarantee there will be any services in place to meet this increased need is there?

Kitty Ussher, director of Demos, said: "The emerging evidence from recent years is that the only way to get those furthest from the labour market back into work is through individual client-led support. Cutting the welfare bill is attractive to Government in the current climate but, without better support for individuals, it threatens to just exclude people further rather than transforming their lives for the better."

And the terrible final irony to all this? It is us, the electorate, who have been asked via various consultations up and down the country where we want the cuts to bite. As one political blogger put it: 'It's like being asked if you want to be punched in the face rather than the cojones.'

State vs Individual

We're in a state of dramatic and fundamental change in relation to the way Adult Social Care is provided as the basic understanding behind social care is now shifting from one where 'the state knows best,' to one where 'the individual knows best,' Prime Minister David Cameron hijacked a key phrase from the 1970s disability rights movement when he talked about 'Nothing about us without us,' at a Conservative Party Conference earlier this year.

Local Authority budgets are being dramatically cut. The Institute for Fiscal Studies believes the social care budget could be cut by 33% over the next spending period. Paul Burstow MP, Minister of State for Care, says he knows some councils are 'preparing to slash and burn social care budgets.'

At the moment one of the main barriers preventing people from making use of Personal Budgets is the lack of information. A report last year estimated that 80% of social care and health users did not understand personal budgets.

In summary, the changes we're going through, the pace of these changes, and the way the changes are being implemented can look very threatening for Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) and User Led organisations (ULOs). These changes are also intimidating and threatening for disabled people and service users, as well as for social care staff – frontline and managers alike.

Legislation

The process of change began in the 1990s with the implementation of Direct Payments legislation. This meant an individual could receive money rather than services from their Local Authority. The individual was then able to employ his or her own personal assistants to meet their identified needs. The services commissioned by the individual were more responsive to the individual's needs, and were delivered by a person chosen by the service user rather than by the Local Authority.

The legislation has rolled out from this point forwards and has taken us to a place where every Local Authority must now start implementing Personal Budgets – building on the principles of Direct Payments – right now.

Paul Burstow has stated that he is impatient of the pace at which local councils are implementing Personal Budgets. He states Personal Budgets need to become more widely available (from November 2010). This is a dramatic change to the previous timetable, which had April 2011 as the next date to watch out for.

At a local level, including here in Cornwall, every person who is assessed as having a social care need is going to be given a Personal Budget instead of a Local Authority care package. The individual person then has three options in relation to how they manage this Personal Budget:

- They can leave it up to the Local Authority to manage the budget for them and to buy in, or provide, services to the individual
- The individual can manage the Budget themselves, employing Personal Assistants to do the things they have been assessed as needing
- They can choose a combination of these things by managing some of the budget, while the council manages the rest of it.

At present Personal Budgets relate only to social care needs. Paul Burstow wants a total roll-out across the UK and hopes to extend them to non-critical health care as the government ends the one-size-fits-all NHS.

Conclusion

These are dramatic, terrifying times for many people, as well as for the DPOs & ULOs. Services will be cut or disappear entirely when disabled people depend on these services to enable them to remain living independently in the community.

DPOs and ULOs must work closely with individuals, to help steer a path through these choppy waters. It is also up to these organisations to represent the voices of disabled people locally, regionally and nationally and to make sure the people who are making these cuts are aware of what a difference they will make to the lives disabled people lead.

In the pursuit of deficit reduction and of greater choice and control for the individual, surely we need to keep the most fundamental choice very firmly in mind – for disabled people to live in the community where they belong with the services they need to support them.

Down & out a



Graham Walker selling the Bigger Issue

With Christmas approaching, the national media once again turn their thoughts toward the plight of the homeless. Whilst we tuck into overcooked sprouts and a jar of last year's cranberry sauce the papers are abound with stories of those less fortunate! It's the one week of the year when the media, instead of labelling the homeless as druggies, criminals, wasters and

the like, suddenly use the hapless, sad, in need, those less fortunate. So on Christmas day, whilst most will be tucking into turkey, the 'less fortunate,' the homeless throughout Cornwall will, on a cold street or in a church hall, be served soup, sustenance and friendship. Which leads me to this question; what thoughts does 'soup kitchen' conjure up for you? Well, doing a little research on the internet, some of the 'conjured thoughts' that

appeared on the screen were: 'filthy tramps looking for a hand-out, the poor and needy, salvation army, people that have fallen by the wayside,' but for me, having spent most of the last twenty years on the road and consequently a regular in various soup kitchens around the South West, the most poignant thought was; a place where heart-warming meals bring together a community of people who need help.

Soup kitchens were at their peak in the 1930/1940s when the UK was impoverished. There to feed those who for whatever reason had no means of cooking or simply couldn't afford food. But they do in fact date back to the early 19th century when in the 1820s, it was suggested by civic leaders and charity reformers that soup kitchens encouraged poverty by destroying self-reliance, and emphasis would be better placed on 'reforming the moral character of the poor rather than feeding them or providing material needs.'

So let's step forward almost 200 years. Whilst you can find a soup kitchen in almost every town between Aberdeen and Penzance, the attitude towards soup kitchens 200 years later, remains the absolute same!

Recently, Westminster city council attempted to have all soup kitchens banned in their borough because 'they are drawing people out of hostels and back on the streets.'

Homeless or in need? Cornv

There are a variety of facilities to support people who are homeless or facing extreme poverty across Cornwall. From Penzance to Bodmin soup kitchens offer food, which is either free or at very low cost and are located in most towns. They often provide other services for homeless people such as, showers, laundry facilities, advice services and some even have night shelters. East of Bodmin there are no soup kitchens but several foodbanks, collecting food for distribution to individuals and families in need of food.

All the services opposite rely on public donations, if you feel you can support your local soup kitchen or foodbank, or know someone in need of the service; please make contact with your nearest facility.

Bodmin

Foodbank: For vouchers
T: 01208 813110

Bodmin Christian Fellowship,
Berrycombe Road
Open: Weds 1.30pm – 3pm

Bude

Foodbank: For vouchers
contact the Citizens Advice Bureau
T: 01288 354531

New Life Centre, 35 The Strand
Open: Mon to Fri 10am – 1pm

Camborne

Homeless Support & Soup Kitchens:

New Connections, 11 Basset Road
T: 01209 722485 (Day Centre)
Open: daily 9am – 3.30pm
T: 01209 713457 (Night Shelter)
Open: daily 3.30pm – 9am
weekends 24 hours

Drop In and Share Club (DISC): Camborne
Parish Church Hall, Church Street
T: 01209 716484
Open: Tue to Fri 9am – 2pm

Falmouth

Foodbank: For vouchers T: 01326 378433
Highway House, 2a Annear Road, Penryn

Soup Kitchens:
Falmouth Homeless Action Group / Churches
Together, St Mary's Catholic Church,
Killigrew Street
Open: Tues 12am – 1.30pm

Dracaena Centre, Dracaena Avenue
Open: Weds 10.30am – 1.30pm

Newquay

Soup Kitchens:
St. Michael's Church, 20 St Michaels Road
Open: Mon, Wed & Sat 4.30pm – 5.30pm

United Reform Church, Bank Street
Open: Tue, Wed & Thu 12.30pm – 1.30pm

at Christmas

Even John Bird, the owner of the Big Issue states that soup kitchens keep people on the streets rather than help them off. I couldn't disagree more. To suggest that people who sleep rough (average life span 48 years), people who risk life and limb, hypothermia, derision, beatings etc, do so purely because three times a week a soup kitchen supplies them with a sandwich and a mug of tea, beggars belief!

On their own, soup kitchens are not earth movers as far as the homeless population is concerned. They don't resolve the underlying problems of homelessness. What they do is offer sustenance to those in need. Critics would say, why should we hand out free food to homeless alcoholics and heroin users who spend all their money on their habit? My response would be: at this moment in their lives, their habit is their primary 'need,' food is secondary. But that food, that sustenance, that friendship might just keep them alive for one extra day; perhaps a golden day, a magical day, a day when their needs, their lives are turned around. A day perhaps that turns into a week, a week that turns into a future. A future that may never happen if not for the food and support the soup kitchen provides.

Possibly as Cornwall is one of the poorest economic regions in the UK, most Cornish towns have a soup

kitchen. Some, as in Penzance, supply a cooked breakfast every day, Newquay, lunch three times a week. But what they all have in common is they supply in whatever form, sustenance. Soup kitchens, whilst frequented mainly by the homeless, from my experience accommodate a vast array of people. Walk into any soup kitchen and you won't just see the homeless. You'll also see the lonely, the suicidal, the potential homeless, the elderly, and people with depression. A diverse community. A community in need. A community receiving sustenance.

Yes soup kitchens, having been around since the early 19th century, thankfully, aint goin' nowhere!

So, have a wonderful Christmas. And may I beg you to take just one minute out of your Christmas Day to think about those who, for whatever reason, are indeed less fortunate, and if you do have spare tins of food, socks, sleeping bags, clothing (even cash) check out your local soup kitchen.

"A place where heart-warming meals bring together a community of people who need help."

By Graham Walker – Author of 'Unsettled' an inspirational autobiography of a Big Issue seller, fundraiser and writer.

Wall's places of sustenance

Penzance

Soup Kitchens:
Churches Together in Penzance Area Breakfast Project, Manna's Diner, Top Floor, Wharfside Centre
Open: Mon to Fri 7am – 8.30am
Breadline Centre, Bread Street
T: 01736 366767
Open: Mon to Fri 10am – 4pm
Shelter:
YMCA, The Orchard, Alverton Road (Supported housing for 16–25 year olds)
T: 01736 334820
Open: 24 hours seven days a week

St Austell

Foodbank: 'More than Coffee', 16B Truro Road
T: 01726 75953
Open: Mon to Sat 10am – 5pm
Soup Kitchen: STAK,
8 High Cross Street
Open: Mon to Sat 10.30am – 5.30pm

Truro

Foodbank: From two locations on three days, for more details or for vouchers
T: 07721 711669
Soup Kitchens:
Truro Homeless Action Group,
St Paul's Hall, Agar Road
Open: every morning 8am – 8.30am
Pasty & soup run provided from The Leats every Mon at 6.30pm
Soup run provided from The Piazza every Wed at 5.45pm
Soup run provided from St John's Hall, Strangways Terrace every Fri at 6pm

Wadebridge

Foodbank: For vouchers
T: 01208 813110
Wadebridge Christian centre,
Molesworth Street
Open: Tue 10am – 12.30pm
& Thu 2pm – 4pm

St Petrocs Society

Provides accommodation and housing related support services for single homeless people.
T: 01872 264153
E: home@stpetrocs.org.uk
www.stpetrocs.org.uk
Supported accommodation:
Bodmin Castle 01208 77165
Bodmin Chapel 01208 269930
Falmouth, Trelawney 01326 319360
Newquay, St Georges 01637 872491
Truro, Alexandra 01872 222405
Truro, Tremayne 01872 270124

When collating this information we could not find an official listing of services so any information given above is correct to the best of our knowledge. We would like to thank the Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum for their help and assistance.

Heavy metal takes to the skies

By Nathan Doidge



Earlier this year, just after being presented with the 2009 award for achieving the most from my scholarship from the charity, Flying Scholarships for the Disabled (FSD), Sir Timothy Nathan approached me to ask if I would like to be a passenger on part of the Battle of Britain memorial flight with lead singer of Iron Maiden, Bruce Dickinson. Would I ever!

Sir Timothy, a trustee of FSD recounts how this amazing opportunity came about: "Last year a group of four aircraft flew in tight formation around all the islands in the British Isles between dawn and dusk, with Flying Scholarships for the Disabled scholars on board, to raise funds and awareness for FSD. It was hugely successful and this year we wanted to find a project to repeat the success."

He continued: "Being the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain our thoughts turned to doing a tour of all the Battle of Britain airfields in a day but, upon investigation, it turned out the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF) were doing a similar exercise. BBMF are a huge supporter of FSD, to the extent of funding a whole scholarship every year, and they were quick to allow FSD to join in part of their tour. I was lucky enough to have the right kind of aeroplane, so I quickly volunteered before anyone else could see that an opportunity of a lifetime was being offered on a plate."

As part of the exercise, FSD also asked Sir Timothy to do them a favour, to pick up the two best known living veterans of the Battle, take them to Conningsby and then fly in formation with the actual aircraft; a Spitfire and a Hurricane, which they flew in the Battle. These veterans, Geoffrey Wellum and Bob Foster, have been

made famous by the BBC coverage of the Battle this year, both through the dramatisation of Geoffrey's book, 'First Light' (thought by many to be one of the best aviation books ever written), and through the documentary made by Ewan McGregor and his brother. Timothy said, "Meeting these guys and flying with them was a once in a lifetime opportunity, as was formatting with their irreplaceable, evocative and unique aircraft."

The next day was my turn to experience an unforgettable day. We rose early and headed for Biggin Hill airfield, where Timothy's Piper Aztec is kept. From there, we flew with the aeroplane's co-owner and two other FSD trustees on-board, to Duxford airfield, where we met Bruce Dickinson. As he looked nothing like the person I've seen on stage as the frontman of rock band, Iron Maiden and was so down to earth, I wondered as he greeted me, if it was actually him! It was only after he had attached a name badge to his shirt that I knew for sure. He went on to tell us in general conversation that Iron Maiden were currently on a European tour and Bruce had flown back from Belgium in the early hours of the morning after a concert. He would then be doing a show in Valencia the following evening and it was very plain to see he was understandably chuffed that Iron Maiden's new album was number one in the charts.

As well as fronting arguably the world's most iconic rock band, Bruce is a commercial airline pilot. I was very curious to know how a rock star gets to have such a differing parallel career.

"It was a long hard road," said Bruce, "Especially because I've always been dreadful at maths! The flying makes up for it, together with the amazing range of people that I work with."

He then went on to say, "For a disabled person to



Bruce and Nathan



Bruce with his band Iron Maiden

learn to fly takes more determination than I could countenance, so much respect is due."

I wondered if this was what made him want to support FSD?

"The joy of flight is something that inspires many of us," he said, "And if you have the desire, then disability should not be a barrier to joy. FSD is there to provide the opportunity...the rest is up to you!"

This is also what I believe and perhaps it's this which has got me to where I am today; flying solo despite my disability. Even so, when it came to dealing with the press, it was surreal to find their attention was equally divided between Bruce and I, even more so when Bruce was being interviewed and I overheard him praising me for my flying achievements. A famous rock star talking about me; I felt both flattered and hugely unworthy.

With the first of many interviews complete, it was time for our flypast. We boarded the Aztec and flew to where it was agreed we would meet up, in mid-flight, with two Spitfires and two Hurricanes. After much anticipation, they arrived with breath taking presence and we led the formation back to, and over Duxford airfield.

As Bruce said in one of his interviews, "It's amazing. To see a pair of Hurricanes and a pair of Spitfires on the wing makes you see the essential nature of these things; they were hunters and honestly, it was really astonishing, an incredible feeling."

I shared this sentiment. I had looked around, taking everything in; the aircraft flying so close to our wingtips, Bruce sitting behind me and just couldn't believe my luck at having such a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

With countless interviews done, it was time for us to

head back to Biggin Hill for another press call and with Bruce unfortunately unable to join us from here on in, all the reporters' attention would be on me. Again, this was very flattering and with my interview time probably exceeding two hours that day, quite unexpected. I fly because I enjoy it. People just happen to be interested in what I'm doing.

After all the interviews were over, I then got the opportunity to have my photo taken with two of the Spitfire and Hurricane pilots; yet another experience I'll never forget, in a whole day of such experiences, which ended with us doing another flypast with a Hurricane.

This was a magical day and one which I feel truly privileged to have been asked to be a part of. I hope we did all who fought in the Battle of Britain proud while raising funds and awareness for FSD.



Nathan with the Spitfire & Hurricane pilots

Transforming the NHS or an exercise in smoke and mirrors?

The first rule of change management is: You must take the people who are going to have to implement change with you. As the Coalition charges ahead with what many perceive as an agenda driven by ideology rather than a desire for real improvements for patients, trying to unpick the detail to the proposals is like trying to get an appointment with a GP outside working hours.

The problem is that there are too many vested interests

at play and not enough voice, or time, for those who really will bear the brunt of any mismanagement ahead, patients themselves. And there is the small matter of no democratic mandate for the proposals – do you remember anything about handing the NHS budget to GPs in the Conservative manifesto?

We need a closer look, not only at the proposals (if you've got a week to read the detail that is), but at all the players in the game, because it is perhaps only here that we can get a clearer insight into what the proposals actually mean for you and me.

Doctors

'Our first duty is to our patients, not to the Trust, the NHS, or to Society' (From the General Medical Council's 'Duties of a Doctor.')

The British Medical Association has welcomed the prospect of clinicians deciding where resources are spent and given that it's doctors, rather than managers, who actually come into contact with patients, this makes good sense. However, given an £80billion budget to control coupled with a £20billion savings target by 2014, will the role of GP as champion of their patient be compromised by their role as budget holder? Picture the scenario; in 2014 you've developed a condition and done your own research on possible treatments. When your GP prescribes, you're wondering if it's because it's the cheapest option, rather than the most effective. With GPs as budget holders, your GP will be both a provider and commissioner, placing a major conflict of interest at the heart of the NHS.

Is it fair to make GPs responsible for the commissioning of services? With no experience (if they wanted to be managers they would have gone to business school) there is a real danger that the desire to prioritise patient need will lead to a failure in budget management. What then? Are GPs being set up to fail? Will services be handed over to huge profit-driven companies, whose drive will be to serve shareholders

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first, patients last? Once the NHS leaves public control there is no going back. And while we know that GPs fought the introduction of the NHS in 1948 and had to have their 'mouths stuffed with gold' to comply (a lesson not lost on the last Labour Government), as long as they are salaried out of public funds we are at least clear on their role: public health practitioners, not accountants.

The Private Sector

Given human nature's propensity for acquisition and self-interest it's not hard to see why the principles of private enterprise reign supreme. Where it brings real choice in a truly open market and is not underpinned by the exploitation of the people who deliver up the profits (the workforce) then it can mean welcome efficiencies and higher standards. However, if we want to see what happens when it is allowed to run amok we only have to look across the water to America where, despite 50 million Americans being denied access to basic healthcare in the richest country in the world, Barak Obama looks like a broken man after his battle to push through policies that have already become a shadow of their former selves. Back in the UK, the abandonment of 18 week waiting targets for patients, coupled with the removal of the private patient cap, which limits the number of private patients that can utilise NHS facilities, will mean even greater opportunities for the private sector as desperate patients are offered impossible choices: pay now and get treated, don't pay and take your place at the back of the queue. The private sector is already in the game, cherry-picking the 'quick-fixes' (hip and knee replacements to you and me), but this is at least balanced by hard targets that limit private sector provision. Remove those and you have a free-for-all that is, of course, not free at all.

Patients

The Patients Association gave a cautious welcome to the proposals, but why wouldn't they, when the reforms have been launched with a fanfare about patient choice and local accountability – who could argue with that? Well, how about that old bugbear, the postcode lottery rearing its ugly head again? Localism is all well and good if it is democratically accountable and there are mechanisms to ensure it's not only the chattering classes that get a say. But with our transformation into a Big Society, when we will all be spending our spare time (what do you mean you don't have any after your 80 hr week?) volunteering for good causes, you'll also have to ensure you find time to join the queue at your GPs' surgery (or lobbying your MP, or Healthwatch) to make sure you have a chance of getting the services you need delivered in your local area. It's not called the National Health

Service for nothing – it's not perfect, but national accountability means we all have fair chance of accessing the same services. Haven't we just spent years trying to win the battle against the postcode lottery? Hello again.

The Government

If you voted for the Conservatives and are struggling to remember where in their manifesto the Tories proposed the wholesale dismantling of the NHS, stop struggling – it wasn't in there. Herein lies the injustice. Not one of us, no matter what our political persuasion, voted for this. Democracy has its shortfalls (after all, within our current voting system it really is the dictatorship of the many by the few) but surely we, the electorate, have a right to make a decision on whether we want to gamble with the envy of the world? And yet this is the very same government that parades concepts of democracy and local decision-making as if these are the panacea to solve all ills. For a government so keen on democracy, isn't it remarkable there hasn't been more effort to ensure the more rigorous consultation (referendum?) and the time to do it in, that these radical and far-reaching proposals surely deserve? That this government asks us to decide on where cuts should fall and expects us to influence where spending on health should go smacks of passing the buck. If doctors fail in managing the £80billion health budget, it won't be the government that's criticised, but GPs themselves, and when the public decides where spending cuts should fall well, we only have ourselves to blame don't we? Machiavelli anyone?

There can be no mistake. These reforms will have the most significant impact on our health service since the NHS was formed in 1948. It is a service, for all its flaws, that we all, even the wealthy, rely on from the cradle to the grave – do we really want to gamble that the private sector can deliver a fairer deal? Is the NHS really so broken that we need to take a sledgehammer to it rather than a carefully judged scalpel? You decide – but don't leave it too late – next time you look it might not be there at all.



Photos courtesy of the NHS

Education not segregation



This is a speech made by Tara Flood, Director of ALLFIE (The Alliance for Inclusive Education).

ALLFIE is a national campaigning network led by disabled people working to change laws, practices and procedures, which discriminate against disabled children and young people and prevent inclusion.

The alliance challenges service providers to think about the purpose of education by using the example George Flynn (a great inclusionist from Canada instrumental in transforming the Canadian education system) gave, of the aim of education being, 'to protect a child's right to imagine a better future' and I think that, in many of the recent debates around what is best for disabled children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) labels, this has been forgotten.

Currently, the role of education for disabled children with SEN labels is to normalise, to rehabilitate, to prepare for a life where healthcare professional intervention should go unquestioned. In essence, to reinforce our difference and lack of status in the world. When in actual fact what should happen is that disabled children and young people, along with their non disabled peers, should have their individual learning needs supported in an environment that truly welcomes diversity, encourages participation and fosters a sense of belonging.

This cannot be achieved in a separate, segregated environment where the medical model of disability or behaviour is central to the ethos.

We all know there have been some high profile media stories and the recent National Union of Teachers (NUT) report tells us that inclusion isn't working or that inclusion is tantamount to abuse of the human rights of disabled children with SEN labels. However these claims are refuted by those of us in the inclusion movement,

including practitioners and parents. These claims are examples of poor integration where children are poorly supported into mainstream settings with very little, or no change, in how the school operates.

I was at an event where a head teacher from Newham gave us an inspirational account of her school. She and many others like her are delivering inclusion every day but aren't shouting about it – because they're busy getting on with it!

The kind of reports that we have seen in the media take a good old medical model approach to this issue and highlight the disabled child or young person as the problem. They don't question the lack of capacity, training or indeed, the prejudicial attitudes of staff or the Local Education Authority for its mealy-mouthed approach to properly supporting the disabled child's learning needs in a mainstream environment.

None of us can deny that some children and their parents have been badly let down by the education system, but is it really the case that any parent would set out to segregate their child from their friends, siblings and their local community? Many feel forced down the segregation route by the disablist behaviour of education professionals who cannot see beyond our impairments. These professionals convince parents that anything other than a special school setting for their child would be dangerous and not in the child's best interests.

Segregation can never be in the best interests of a child, disabled or non-disabled, because of the negative and lasting impact this has on our self-identity, our family and community relationships and ultimately on our aspirations and life chances.

Segregation in childhood, in many cases, leads to segregation in adulthood whether real or emotionally. We don't live in a segregated world why on earth would we choose to segregate children in their young lives?

I would suggest if the Conservative party is serious about its commitment to the right education for disabled children and young people, then this can only be achieved by a policy to properly resource and support the full inclusion of all children at every stage of their learning from early years onwards.

The journey towards inclusion has been likened to bungee jump training

1. First you take the training
2. Then you check the ropes
3. Then you assemble your support team
4. And then YOU JUMP



Members of the new network at the September 2010 launch event

Looking out for disabled children

Disability Cornwall is proud to be part of a new network for voluntary sector providers of children's support services in Cornwall. Formed in response to concerns that children's services were under threat as part

of anticipated cuts in council spending, the Quality Services for Children Voluntary Network, brings together key partners from within the sector to ensure disabled children and their families get a fair deal in Cornwall.

Disabled children have the right to be supported to live as full members of their communities, but historically Cornwall has struggled with implementing and sustaining effective services to ensure disabled children reach their full potential. While progress has been made in recent years with the introduction of the Every Disabled Child Matters agenda, which put in place a framework of universal services aimed at ensuring every disabled child has the best chance of leading a normal life, there is a real danger this good work could be undone if anticipated cuts to services are targeted unfairly at this particularly vulnerable group.

The network aims to work in partnership with Cornwall Council, Children's Services and the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Primary Care Trust to ensure the best use of resources for positive outcomes for disabled children and their families. Councillor Neil Burden and other senior council officers have been invited to address the network's next meeting.

Members of the network include Scope, the Association for Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus (ASBAH), Contact a Family, the Association of Parent Trainers and the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities.

Andrew Mullen, Head of Service at the Scope Inclusion team and chair of the Network, said: "While we recognise the challenges of the economy and the need for savings to be made, we are worried that the full impact of any cuts to services affecting disabled children and their families may not yet be fully understood. We want to work with the Council to make sure the difficult financial situation doesn't adversely affect the families and young people in Cornwall who rely on vital lifelines of support and funding."



11million.org

Is the approximate number of children in the UK, and this child friendly website has been set up so children have a direct way of telling the Children's Commissioner, Maggie Atkinson, of how they think things can be improved.

The role of the commissioner was created by the Children Act 2004 and is there to promote the views of children and young people from birth to 18 (up to 21 for young people in care or with learning difficulties). Children and young people will be actively involved in shaping all decisions that affect their lives, are supported to achieve their full potential through the provision of appropriate services, and will live in homes and communities where their rights are respected and they are loved, safe and enjoy life.

Children and young people can have their say through the site by answering questions and uploading content such as videos, powerpoint and photographs. Their views will shape policies and influence decision-makers.



Inclusive Eden Sessions

By: The Sensory Trust, Eden Project & Silva Productions

Duration: 10 minutes

Content: An exciting new film showcasing what can be achieved when local organisations work in partnership is now available on YouTube. The Sensory Trust and the Eden Project have worked hard to ensure the annual live music events, known as The Eden Sessions, over the years featuring artists such as Moby, The Verve, Amy Winehouse, the Kooks and many others, are inclusive. The film tells the story of how the two organisations have worked with partners, such as Disability Cornwall, to develop a greater understanding of what everyone may need to have a really great time at outdoor live music events. From an accessible wheelchair platform and lowered bar counters to balloons for deaf people to 'feel' the music, the film demonstrates that everyone now has the opportunity to be part of a live music experience, which is something no one should miss out on, just because they have a disability.

To view the film visit:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ld8R_4lusNI
(subtitled)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=I7FohXtAWPA&feature=related (non subtitled)

Or simply search 'Eden Sessions Sensory Trust'



Sicko

By: Michael Moore

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Content: America's most incendiary filmmaker, Michael Moore, returned in 2007 with this health-care-industry expose. SICKO tackles material as controversial as the topics explored in Moore's other films, yet does so in a way that places the focus on ordinary Americans affected by the nation's health-care crisis. After providing some historical background on how the nation's medical care system became so ravaged and unfair, Moore interviews a series of individuals and families who have had their lives all but destroyed by the denial of care in the service of profit.

While there are two sides to the gun-control debate and even a legitimate discourse for how to best wage the war on terror, it's simply impossible to justify how a baby girl can wind up dead because her mother's health insurance wasn't accepted at a nearby hospital. Moore smartly allows this and other stories to be told with little or no interference, conjuring strong feelings of empathy, rage and deep sadness.

Purchase from Amazon, ebay or play.com

Films



How Long Would You Wait?

By: Effervescent Social Alchemy and Cornwall Partnership NHS

Foundation Trust

Duration: Two minutes

Content: A breath taking film to raise awareness of psychosis and encourage friends and family to intervene early. It features people submerged in water and waiting to be rescued, symbolising how a person's reality can change when they experience an episode of psychosis.

Speaking about the importance of early intervention in psychosis, Angela Hawke, an Early Intervention Team Manager said: "Psychosis can affect anyone at any time. For the person experiencing it, it's like a reality shift in which their world changes. A little like being underwater, the world suddenly looks, sounds, tastes, or feels different, but it is not always obvious to the person why that is. A person might not be aware of their difficulties, although friends, family, and others notice changes. It's these people who are so often the key to a person receiving the early support that makes a huge difference in how the experience is played out."

The film has already been nominated for the national 'Young People Now' Awards 2010 and in addition to the website below is available on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

To view the film visit:

www.howlongwouldyouwait.com



Ben Wilson

Ben's new business

I was born in London in April 1973, a perfectly healthy child until I contracted meningitis at the age of six months, which put me in hospital for the same amount of time. Apparently, at one point I was clinically dead for 24 hours, so am actually very lucky to be even writing this article. Meningitis left me with impaired vision in my left eye and a weak right hand and leg, as well as having to take regular medication for epilepsy.

I was mercilessly bullied at secondary school, knocking my self-confidence and my exam results suffered severely. It wasn't until I left and went to college that I regained some confidence and started to pass tests and exams, subsequently leaving college with a BTEC National Diploma in Media Studies and a HND in Business and Finance. I wanted a career in the media as that was where my heart lay.

When it came to looking for work I applied for every conceivable job, while signing on for unemployment benefit. I did get the odd interview, but was never offered a job and believe this was to do with the fact that I have a disability. The only work I could get was voluntary work and short contracts through employment agencies until I worked at my Dad's organisation, War Child, that set out to help and support child victims of war. From there I managed to move on to an 18 month stint at MTV Europe, which I loved and wish could have lasted longer, but sadly it was like most of my work, only a contract.

I moved to Cornwall in 2006 as I was getting fed up with London and the atmosphere and attitude of the

people. I continued looking for work and signed on again while doing so but again, I was getting nowhere. I decided to approach Volunteer Cornwall and did some work at both the British Heart Foundation and the actual Volunteer Cornwall offices in Truro.

I then set up my own business, Noises Off, which was initially intended to carry out audio/video conversion work (tapes and records converted to CDs etc) and although I'm still keeping that side of the business up, there have been other areas added, such as filming and photography for special events and music promotion.

Although I still receive some benefits as I'm not yet earning enough, I am now fully self-employed and it's seriously boosted my confidence and given me a new lease of life. It's also great to be working for myself and not answering to anyone, other than my clients. I strongly feel if I hadn't set the company up, I would have slipped backwards and lost the self-confidence I had previously gained.

Ben Wilson (Noises Off)

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As the DDA hits its 15 year anniversary and becomes incorporated into the Equality Act, it's worth having a look back to ask the question:

15 years on ... but **Did** it **Do** **Anything** when it **Did** **Demand** **A** lot?



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1995 was an auspicious year for disabled people in the UK. After decades of civil action and demands for the right to live independently as full members of society, the Disability Discrimination Act gave disabled people their first legal rights not to be discriminated against. The DDA has been amended over the years to include the areas of Employment, Goods and Services, Education and Transport, but at its core lies a clear message. Discrimination under the DDA is identified as:

- less favourable treatment for a reason related to a disabled person's disability
- failure to make a 'reasonable adjustment'

While it is certainly fair to say that general public attitudes to disability have improved over the years, with a greater 'presence' of disabled people in all realms of society, it's unfortunate that the success of implementing the DDA in law has depended so much on one word – 'Reasonable.' For it's in the interpretation of what might be

'reasonable' under the Act, coupled with significant shortcomings in the available means for enforcing the law on a practical level, that have frustrated many within the Disability movement.

For example, it might be reasonable for a small employer to argue that adjustments to working practices or premises to support disabled employees would be too costly or disruptive to the day to day running of the business. Given that we are a nation of small businesses, this rather begs the question: who does the Act serve here? In Cornwall, particularly, we have endemic problems with physical access to the environment and in a city like Truro, for example, with so many listed buildings (are the cobbled pavements and roads 'listed' too?) it is hard to imagine a time when disabled people really will be able to exercise the freedom and choice so many take for granted.

The setting up of the Disability Rights Commission should have heralded a new dawn in terms of practical assistance to take discrimination cases to court. A few high profile cases did, perhaps, send out a strong signal that discrimination would not be tolerated, and no doubt it did motivate a few to raise their game. But the DRC's incorporation into the Equality and Human Rights Commission only served, in many people's view, to dilute the impact a dedicated disability representative body could make on attitudes and practice. The DRC was a vital enforcement tool, with the resources to take on cases and 'test' the law. This in itself clarified the DDA in a way no written document could, for it was only in the practical application of the law that disabled people and providers could see where they stood in relation.

Now, in 2010, we have the Equality Act. This builds upon the DDA and incorporates and extends rights in many other areas, including gender, race and age. It also serves to extend the law in one important regard – it gives rights to those who may be discriminated against 'by association.' This is significant for our 6 million carers, many of whom have fallen victim to discrimination by virtue of caring for a disabled person. After all, if a parent cannot access a café with her disabled child, then she too suffers exclusion. And if the husband of a disabled wife cannot negotiate appropriate working hours to account for his caring responsibilities, then his role is undermined and both his and his wife's health and well-being are at stake.

Experience shows however, that prejudice does not disappear due to an Act of Parliament. The DDA is 15 years old and disabled people are still battling discrimination. That is in spite of good investment by

the previous Government in the public and voluntary sector support services that make real Choice and Control a possibility. Attitudes are slow to change, and it is still the sad case that popular sentiment at times of economic and social challenge will err on the side of making the most vulnerable the scapegoats for society's ills. Headlines are dominated by a right wing press baying for the blood of anyone in receipt of publicly financed financial support, and a one-sided version of the 'blame game' where the poor are only poor because they are feckless, lazy and stupid, is played out again and again.

As this Government asks the public to 'vote' on where the cuts should fall, where is the incentive for those who really could make a difference; commissioners of services at local and national government level, to really engage with the equalities agenda? To insist that service providers prove their commitment to full inclusion rather than, as we hear time and again, that equality and diversity is a 'tick box exercise' and frankly it's all just rather irritating isn't it? But if a top down approach were coupled with bottom up pressure from disabled people, families, carers and communities of individuals everywhere, the Equality Act really might, just might, make the grade.

There is real opportunity here. The Equality Act encourages us to think how we work in terms of a whole society, for few will fit just one of the equality strands as most of us have complex identities: a woman at work, a parent at home, a carer for an elderly parent. As such the Act can only strengthen the quest for greater integration, as we move from thinking about discrimination in terms of 'it only happens to them,' to 'it could easily happen to us, at any time in our lives.' This, surely, is what the Big Society is all about?

If you think you have been a victim of discrimination, act quickly! There are short timescales for bringing discrimination cases (in some cases as little as three months.)

Seek advice from DIAL, the CAB or see a solicitor specialising in discrimination law. Advice is also available from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, including a substantial amount of information on their website www.equalityhumanrights.com

We would like to thank Liz Conroy of Conroys Solicitors for her assistance with this article. Main areas of work: discrimination, employment, public law, community care and mental health.



Cornwall Trail Riders rip it up in Cardinham Woods

By Ross Fisher
Chairman
Cornwall Trail Riders Fellowship

A group of disabled people were due to go horse riding in Wales' Gwyddon Forest, but were told at the last minute the horses were not available so, one of the group Mike Rees, thought he would contact some friends who rode trail motorbikes and instead of hooves, use wheels! That was about 20 years ago and he still runs the event every June.

I became involved in June 2008 when I responded to an appeal in a trail magazine by Mike for trail bikes with rear footrests to support his event, but little did I know how that weekend in Wales would change my life. After spending an afternoon in a beautiful Welsh forest giving pillion rides to people with various abilities, it left me with



so many mixed emotions that the only thing I knew for sure was that I had to do this in Cornwall.

Twelve months later, we held the first Cornwall Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF) taking over 30 disabled people around a three mile route in Dunmere Woods near Bodmin. From little acorns great oaks will grow and summer 2010 saw over 100 disabled people, some 80 family members and support workers, along with over 30 TRF members and supported by Camel Vale Motorcycle Club, giving rides on all types of bikes. My wife Sarah and five other ladies put on the biggest BBQ I have ever seen and served tea and coffee to all.

With everyone having had a great day we waved goodbye saying see you next year. So, I was surprised when the following Monday morning, I had a call from Chris Mason at the Forestry Commission, asking if we would like to hold another event in Cardinham Woods later in the year. A great offer, but it did raise a number of issues; would the bikers and helpers want to do another event so soon, could we raise the insurance money and this time, we would be riding in a public area, so how would that be received?

I made a few phone calls and such was the response, the event was arranged for a Sunday in October. This time it would be a sponsored ride with all passengers



All photos by Geoff Squibb

DISCOVER events

raising money to help replace St Austell PHAB's ageing mini bus.

We were fortunate to have good weather and plenty of sunshine, with lots of riders giving pillion rides through the woods on various trail motorbikes, quad bikes, trailers and trials cars. A BBQ and support from the public enabled us to give rides to over 70 people, plus 40 members of the public, whose peace was further disturbed by their children asking to have a go too! We raised £2,300 and put a smile on lots of faces.

A big thank you to all who helped and gave money, a special thank you to my wife Sarah and son Ryan, who not only support me but actively take part and to Mike Rees for inviting me to Wales, which led to these events being held in Cornwall. It's enabled me to socialise with people I used to see as disabled, refer to as disabled and would try to avoid eye contact with. I now meet a disabled person, or a person with a disability, physical difficulties, learning difficulties, downs syndrome, additional needs... it seems everyone is looking for the right politically correct word but the fact is, we're all just people and individuals, so a big thank you to you.



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The masquerade ball



An evening of glitz, glamour and intrigue for the people of Priory Day Centre in Bodmin was held this year for their annual event. A Masquerade Ball was the theme and helped to make the evening mysterious and exciting to say the least!

The centre's Summer Ball Committee spent many hours prior to the evening planning and organising the long wish list that came out of the discussions each month leading up to the evening itself.

Once again a host of favours were called in and the level of generosity within the local community was astounding and much appreciated.

The crowning glory of the evening was almost certainly the Mayoress of Bodmin choosing the Prom King and Queen. "What an honour for me to do this," said Maggie Denholm, "This is my first job as Mayoress of Bodmin." The prom King was Ian McLeod and the Queen was Denise Ball.

The Priory Day Centre is already looking ahead and planning next year's ball. The theme will probably be Las Vegas, so Bodmin will have to be on the lookout for an Elvis invasion next Summer!



TOMORROWS WORLD



Photos courtesy of the Mirror Group

A Mum whose face was blown off by a shotgun when she was just 16 has been given new 'snap-on' prosthetic features. Chrissy Steltz, 27, had never shown her young son her face, but no longer, thanks to a pioneering procedure. For years she has hidden her horrific injuries behind a black sleeping mask.

A team of doctors spent years completing the prosthesis, which can be removed and re-attached, donating their time and expertise for free. They used photographs of her at 16 to create the prosthesis and aged her features to reflect the 11 years that had passed.

In March 1999, Chrissy from Oregon, USA, lost her eyes, nose and a large part of her skull when drunken friends playing with a stolen shotgun accidentally shot her. The last thing Chrissy would ever see was the gun pointed at her face.

She said: "My words were, put that down before you kill somebody but I was told it wasn't loaded." The gunshot tore off two thirds of her facial features. She then went into a coma and was hospitalised for six weeks.

Chrissy had no idea what had happened to her once she regained consciousness and was told the heartbreaking news that she would never again see or smell. Dr Eric Dierks, a surgeon who has treated Chrissy since the accident, said: "The blast itself removed the contents of her left eye socket, her nose and the supporting mid-facial structures, and damaged her right eye to the extent that she lost vision. It's unique to have an injury of this magnitude to the middle part of the face that removes the vision of both eyes and the nose yet allows the injury to the base of the brain to heal."

Chrissy still lives with dozens of pellets from the shotgun blast lodged so deeply in her brain they never can be removed. Following the accident, she learned to read Braille and use a cane.

She said: "When I finally knew what had happened to me, that I had lost my sight and that it would never be coming back, I knew I could sit back and have a pity party or I could figure out what to do and go about doing it, that's exactly what I did." She met her boyfriend at a school for the blind and gave birth to a son in July 2009.

Although she will never be able to see the prosthesis, she wanted it to improve her self confidence and make her feel more comfortable in public. Because the blast removed Chrissy's eye sockets and sinus cavity, it was decided a prosthesis would be better than a face transplant.

Doctors removed damaged tissue, opened a breathing passage to her nasal cavity, drilled dental implants into her facial bones and fixed magnets to the tips. They also used bone from her right leg, skin grafts and dozens of screws and metal plates so her prosthetic face can snap on and off.

The prosthesis itself was made from flesh-tone silicone, baked to seal in texture and colour and painted to reflect the natural flaws of the human skin. Doctors also added makeup putting eyeliner, eye shadow and mascara directly into the mask to make it as real as possible.

Chrissy's mother burst into tears when she saw her daughter's face for the first time in ten years. But the biggest reveal came when she removed her mask for the first time in front of her one-year-old son. She said: "It's going really well, he's not minding it one bit."

Cornwall Council needs to save millions

As DISCOVER went to print, we received news of how Cornwall Council plans to make savings of £75 million next year. The Cabinet have expressed a desire to ensure front-line services and vulnerable people are protected from the worst effects of any cuts. Here is a summary of some of the main changes we might expect.

Adult Social Care: Removal of ring-fencing and its budget frozen at current levels for the coming financial year. Higher charges for users of transport, reduction of The Supporting People Programme, changes to respite and day services.

With rising need due to an ageing population and greater need as vulnerable people are affected by cuts elsewhere in public services, what will this mean for front-line services?

Expect changes to department spending within Adult Social Care. At present Cornwall is the 2nd lowest spender on Adult Care in the country, but in the highest quartile for spending on learning disabilities.

Children Schools and Families: A currently planned uplift in spending will no longer go ahead. Reasons given – The service has the second highest spend in the country and current performance problems do not relate to a lack of financial resources.

Expect moves to commission more services out to the voluntary sector as at present CSF deliver a much higher proportion of services in-house compared to Adult Social Care.

One Stop Shops and Libraries: Savings of £1million over two years through alignment of library and OSS services, closure to some premises and a review of mobile services.

Welfare and Visiting Services: Visiting officers are currently employed by the council to assess and assist with welfare benefits and eligibility. Savings need to be made of 200k in 2011/12 by working with voluntary sector agencies to deliver more co-ordinated, streamlined services.

Transport: Removal of support to evening and Sunday bus services, potentially leading to all evening bus services being withdrawn. Increased fares for Truro Park and Ride. Replacement of North Cornwall Corlink area dial-a-ride with normal bus service. Removal of funding support for summer only service and the Post-16 transport subsidy.

It's hoped that Colleges will fill the gap.

It is important to stress that the above are just outline ideas at this stage and we will be providing more information about the full extent of the planned cuts in our next issue of DISCOVER. Meanwhile, if you have any concerns or simply want to have your say, don't forget you can call DIAL or email DISCOVER.

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A life changing experience

By Andrea Weston

Until the age of 30 I lived a normal life or whatever that is! I worked full-time from the age of 16 doing various office jobs, but for the last 10 years of my working life, I was a secretary/receptionist to a GP in Stoke-on-Trent (my home town), followed by the same job, but in Salisbury.

It was while I was living in Salisbury I began to get strange symptoms and pains in my legs and back and started to take lots of time off work which was something very alien to me. I remember very vividly the night my life changed forever. It was a Friday night in November 2002, just weeks before I was due to get married on the Christmas Eve. I had the most severe pain in my back and didn't know what on earth to do and to make matters worse; I was at home on my own. During that weekend I saw an out-of-hours GP who gave me some strong painkillers. Thankfully, the wedding went ahead, though I think I only managed to get through the day because I love Paul so much and it was the happiest day of my life, nothing would have stopped me from marrying him.

For the next four years, four very long years, I went through test after test, including some nasty ones and some embarrassing ones. I spent weeks at a time in hospital, started to take morphine regularly, lost my job, dealt with my bladder failing and losing my mobility, yet all the time was constantly told there was nothing wrong with me!

In October 2006 I was admitted to the Royal Cornwall Hospital because I had taken a sudden turn for the worst. An MRI scan finally delivered a diagnosis; apparently I had a tethered spinal cord. (Tethered spinal cord syndrome is a neurological disorder caused by tissue attachments that limit the movement of the spinal cord within the spinal column and subsequently cause an abnormal stretching of the spinal cord.)

This was the start of me spending the next 21 months bed-ridden. Looking back now, I have absolutely no idea how I did that. The thought of going to sleep every night knowing that the morning would bring just another day in bed, and then another and another is just horrendous. During this time I did have surgery to de-tether my spinal cord, which has helped in that it's stopped me from getting any worse.

Finding out I could, and should have been diagnosed some four years before, has been hard to cope with and I've suffered severe depression and to a certain degree still am. But it's something I have to deal with every day and not just the depression and wondering what my life would have been like, but having to deal with the anger too. Anger because I had been very active before this happened to me and used to play squash a couple of times a week, walked and rode my mountain bike over Salisbury plain and loved dancing the night away.

Once I had recovered from being bed-ridden and had built my strength up I started to get bored and needed something to do. I tried for months to find some kind of disability sport in Cornwall but found nothing. In July last year I went along to a disability show in Exeter and met Mark Blackler from Tennistopia. A small tennis court had been set up and so I had a go. It was the point where my life literally changed and from then on has been very different. I know it sounds corny to say, but it really has changed my life and saved me from returning to the very dark days of depression.

Over a year on, I am still playing tennis and have my own chair. At the moment I'm in training for a 2km sponsored swim for 'Help for Heroes' at my local pool in Helston (who have given me free membership while I train.) If you would like to sponsor me you can do so by visiting: www.justgiving.com/andrea-weston



Help fix the web



Mandy & Donald helping to improve internet accessibility



It's not news that for anyone with a disability going online can be very frustrating. The overwhelming majority of websites are simply not designed with accessibility for all in mind. A refreshing, new campaign called 'Fix the Web' has

recently been launched to tackle the problem, aiming to make the internet fully accessible for everyone.

There is currently a shocking lack of awareness among those who design and build websites, when it comes to accessibility for disabled people. Just as in the built environment, laws are in place to support access yet it's apparent that those shaping the digital world are either ignorant of the law or ignoring the needs of disabled people, despite the proven business case for inclusive design. With a potential market of 1.6 million registered blind users, 1.5 million people with cognitive difficulties and a further 3.4 million with disabilities preventing them from using the standard keyboard, screen and mouse set-up with ease, AbilityNet claim e-businesses are losing out on some £50-£60 billion per year by not having fully accessible websites. It's sobering to consider that blind users lose, on average, more than 30% of their time due to web access issues, according to a study of 100 blind users.

Fix the Web is taking an innovative grassroots approach, calling on disabled web users to report problems they encounter online. These complaints

will then be passed onto a huge network of technical volunteers who will take issues back to the website owners so they can be fixed. Launched by Citizens Online, a national charity campaigning for internet access for all, Fix the Web firmly believes disabled people shouldn't be expected to fight their corner yet again.

The process for a disabled person to engage with Fix the Web is very streamlined – reporting a problem with a website will take less than a minute and is easily done through a form on the site, via twitter, or by emailing. Users can make complaints quickly in the knowledge there will be a whole battalion of people ready to take up their cause!

Fix the Web is simultaneously recruiting a vast taskforce of techie volunteers to help with the reporting process and to share their knowledge and skills in the development of the project. By reaching out to the technical community to ask them to volunteer, not only do individuals benefit but the techies involved will get the feel good factor from supporting a vital, mass campaign as well as increasing their skills and

knowledge in the process. Furthermore, Fix the Web is also helping to bring about a digital culture change through raising awareness of the issues facing disabled people online. In effect, the campaign is setting up a mass user testing of the internet to stimulate positive change.



Dr. Gail Bradbrook

DISCOVER *information & advice*

Dr. Gail Bradbrook of Citizens Online comments: "People that don't understand the issues of e-accessibility will be horrified, I think, to learn that the web they love so much is excluding. It can be time consuming (and actually impossible, if for example, an inaccessible capture is used on a feedback form) for disabled people to report issues. But more importantly, I feel strongly this isn't a problem disabled people should have to own and solve. Why should a disabled person go round creating fixes for other people's ignorance? It's time a cadre of volunteers took charge of the issue and made it their own."

Fix the Web wants as many people involved as possible and are quick to point out it's not about taking up huge amounts of people's time. The following skills / attributes would be very helpful in supporting the campaign:

- Disabled people willing to start reporting issues
- People able to support PR and marketing by mailing their networks or covering the solution (once developed) in an article
- Techies willing to volunteer

Web user Mandy de la Mare, who is blind and was born thalidomide said: "The internet is still very patchy for blind people with many websites still not accessible. Quite a few websites I have been on limit me because there are buttons the screen reader is unable to read or locate for me. A large number of websites are not suitable for speech, as the edit areas are only accessible for keystrokes, so at that point I am not able to use speech and have to resort back to the keyboard, which really slows me down and I tend to make mistakes."

She added, "I have tried complaining to various websites but either the forms are not accessible for me or I don't get a reply. This is why I am a great believer in this project. I think Gail Bradbrook has come up with a fantastic idea of getting disabled people to join in to get website owners to address accessibility issues. I really do believe that a large group of people campaigning together will have a lot more impact than individuals acting alone."

Bug testing took place in October, though it's expected to take a few months before the system is completely ironed out, so people are asked to be patient and feedback any thoughts they have about the process.

If you want to support Fix the Web, please visit their website or contact Nicky Ferry for further information.

T: 01453 766334

E: pumpkin.comms@virgin.net

www.fixtheweb.net

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Empowering Employers to be inclusive

The Disability Clearkit, is an online service sharing best practice and guidance for recruiting disabled people.

Initiated by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in partnership with the Employers Forum on Disability, as the DWP were concerned that employers still remain unsure about recruiting disabled people.

Over 200 employers contributed to this Clearkit, including HMRC and British Telecom (BT). Kate Headley, Director of the company which developed it said: "During recent years there have been many initiatives to improve the job prospects of disabled people, but the percentage of working age disabled people in employment has remained static at around 47%, compared with an overall rate of around 78%."

BT, through its award-winning Able to Work programme, gave opportunities for over 300 disabled people since the scheme began in 2003 and its monitoring showed disabled candidates performed as effectively – if not better than non-disabled colleagues. BT also found disabled employees remained longer, with 67% having over one year's service, compared with 46% of non-disabled people.

www.clearinclusion.com

Disability Cornwall has launched itself in the social networking sphere!

Follow us on Twitter
www.twitter.com/CornwallDC



Find us on Facebook, search 'Disability Cornwall'



Our new website will be launched during December www.disabilitycornwall.org.uk



Personal Budgets Support Service

We actively promote the opportunities personal budgets can bring for increased choice and control over your own life. Don't feel daunted by the prospect of becoming an employer; we are here to help and can support you through this process with our professional services.

Payroll We offer a monthly payroll service which includes: pay slips, employer summary report, tax & national insurance returns, P45's and P35 end of year tax return.

Employer Support For a modest fee (or free via email), we can provide you with a comprehensive information pack providing guidance about everything you need to know and more. It includes templates and checklists for getting started, employing and retaining your personal assistant, being a good employer and general troubleshooting.

We can also provide additional support services if required such as arranging & attending interviews, providing an interview room, creating & placing adverts and producing & mailing recruitment letters.

9am - 5pm Monday to Friday. Contact Sharon Riley
T: 01736 756655 E: sharon@disabilitycornwall.org.uk

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NEEDING TO PEE IN THE PUB

I recently visited a pub in Wadebridge that I know well as it used to be my local back in the 1960s when it was privately owned. The gents toilet was in the public bar and the ladies was upstairs and of course, no such thing as an 'accessible' toilet in those days. However, I was very surprised on my visit this year to find that, although the pub is now owned by St Austell Brewery, the ladies toilet is still upstairs, the gents remains where it was, off the bar, and there is still no accessible toilet. I wrote to the pub's manager and copied it to the St Austell Brewery Managing Director and while waiting for a reply, spoke to several friends who have encountered similar problems in other pubs in the North Cornwall area. I now have a different 'local,' it is still privately owned and the owners were required to provide accessible toilets before they could get their licence.

I received a reply from St Austell Brewery acknowledging the lack of both an accessible toilet and easily accessible ladies, but as this particular pub is a listed building, they have been limited in what they could do. Apparently a full access audit was carried out and all staff trained on its implications. They did say they would be revisiting the site in view of my comments to see if any improvements can be made and a copy was sent to the pub's manager.

To make matters worse, there appears to be no accessible public toilets within easy reach of this pub either, so what are we to do?

I know that accessibility for all does not always seem to fit with listed and old buildings but there have to be ways round this. I'm sure other readers have experienced this problem and I would be very interested to hear what they have done about it.

Joan Philp
Launceston E: joan@philp60.fsnet.co.uk

FUN FAMILY DAY OUT WITH BF ADVENTURE

Over the years my son, who has autism and a severe learning disability, has attended a variety of funded activities and my older boy has had similar opportunities as the sibling of a disabled brother. But as an active mother and carer, struggling on a low income, I have often thought 'What about me? I'd love to do that!' Finally I heard about funded family activity days at BF Adventures, applied for a place, and had the most wonderful day out with my sons.

We started with some fun team building activities with our three young instructors. They were friendly, kind and endlessly patient, not just with the children and their difficulties, but also at getting me across the rickety boards from one side of the lake to the other!

We then went on to try our archery skills. My oldest boy excelled with three golds in a row with his first three tries! After that, a quick go on the low rope area before lunch.

In the afternoon we went canoeing in a water filled quarry in a different part of the site. It was great fun and some of us had a quick swim in the unbelievably warm water to finish off before sadly and all too soon, the day was over.

I really enjoyed the day; it was one of the highlights of the summer holidays as it was so nice to be able to have a go at the activities with my children.

I'd like to thank Jess, Jes and Mark for looking after us so well. I'd completely recommend a day there for other families who have children with any kind of disability.

Brianna Breeze
Hayle

your views your say your letters

CUTTING CHILD BENEFIT

Thank you DISCOVER for continuing to cover the issues that really matter to people in Cornwall

With massive cuts to public services affecting the poorest in our communities, I really despair of the mainstream media and the hysteria surrounding the removal of Child Benefit for those on incomes of over £44,000. Maybe the Government should have thought more carefully about how that would affect single income families, but the truth is most households in Cornwall can only dream of an income that high. Focusing on this 'loss' to the wealthiest in society, only reinforces my belief that those in control of mainstream newspapers have no idea of the harsh reality of surviving on low incomes. Thank goodness for magazines such as yours, continuing to tell it as it really is. Keep up the good work.

M Stafford
Wadebridge

THANK YOU!

In the last two weeks I've been through hell. I'm a disabled person getting DLA high rate mobility and middle rate care. I was in the council offices in Truro when I saw your poster and took down the telephone number and contacted you.

Your staff were brilliant, especially Debbie who was dealing with my case. I just wish there were more organisations like yours; you never let me down once. When I left a message, the following day you contacted me straight away and listened to all of my problems and answered as many questions as possible. You even looked into some questions that you were not sure about. You then rang me straight back with the answers.

I would like to say a huge thank you for being there for me in my time of need. I will be calling back again soon for your help with some forms. Please say a huge thank you to Debbie for her concern and help and I will put the word around to other disabled people.

There's not enough time in the world for me to say thank you! You're a brilliant organisation.

Peter Ellul
Truro

DISCOVER

This is just a note to say how very impressed and interested I am in your magazine 'DISCOVER.' Thank you very much indeed for sending me a copy and I hope all is going well in these difficult times.

With all good wishes.

Lady Mary Holborow, DCVO
Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO CARERS NEWS?

I always enjoy reading DISCOVER and as a carer, used to also find the Carers Magazine pull out section invaluable, but what's happened to it as it wasn't included in either of the last two editions?

I do hope you can continue to keep it as a pull out section as it is so popular with many of the carers I know and also helps to raise the profile of carers and the issues that affect us. Your help means so much to us. Thank you again.

Julie Ford
Truro

EDITORIAL REPLY

We hope Carers News will be making a comeback in the near future. In the mean time DISCOVER contains information hopefully of support and interest to carers as does the Cornwall Council website. If you need any specific assistance or advice, please call the Carer Support Service or DIAL.

It would be great to hear from you

Citizens journalism is what DISCOVER is all about, so please keep sending us your letters.

When our readers write to us regarding their issues of concern, they can rest assured that a copy of DISCOVER is sent directly to the service provider in question, highlighting their letter and requesting an appropriate response.

Please note we will do our best to publish your letters in future editions and that they may be shortened or edited for clarity.

X FACTOR PLOITS



Anyone who was privileged enough to see Shirlena Johnson perform at the X Factor auditions will know it was a performance to remember. "Fantastically nuts," commented Simon Cowell, "I have to say I love you, you're completely crazy, but I like that," before putting Shirlena through to the next round.

But then the psychologists got to her, found out she hadn't declared previous mental health issues on her application form and evicted her from the audition

process, opining as they showed her the door, "the welfare of contestants is of paramount importance and for this reason, it has been agreed that Shirlena Johnson should not continue in the competition."

Of course the welfare of contestants is always of uppermost concern in these exploitative television formats, isn't it? That's why contestants actually undergo a very thorough screening process that involves at least two auditions before they even get to look at the celebrity judges. Auditions designed very much to weed IN those contestants that make the best prime time viewing – the different, the bizarre, the fantastically nuts, and of course public humiliation in front of millions is just what the doctor ordered.

Let's get real about this. What is it about mental health that gets everyone edging towards the door as if they're in that scene in 'The Shining' with Jack Nicholson coming at you with an axe? Actually, better make that edging towards the window because if I remember rightly, the axe ended up IN the door, didn't it? Despite what the lascivious newspaper headlines would have you believe, the vast majority of people with mental health issues are, guess what? Yep, you and me. The fact is all of humanity constantly slides up and down a continuum of mood, attitude and perception. It only becomes an issue when a) individuals get stuck somewhere on the scale, and b) when being in a certain place has negative effects on the ability to lead a normal life, (for 'normal' read 'able to contribute to the economy!')

Yes, mental ill-health is distressing, draining, and downright irritating for all of us at times. But who's to say Shirlena's condition isn't caused, or at least exacerbated, by a society that thinks it permissible to isolate and make pariahs of those of us who don't quite fit in? Screening has only occurred following Susan Boyle's very public breakdown following her participation in 'Britain's Got Talent' two years ago. But who knows what would have happened if Susan had been left as she was, lonely and disengaged in a world that neither knew, or cared, if she even existed? Who is to say

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Email lizconroy@conroys.gb.com
www.conroys.gb.com

XPOSES AND XCLUDES



Photo courtesy of BBC, Daily Mail, fanpop.com & thecount.com

now, that Susan Boyle's considerable success hasn't been a tonic in itself? She now has the adoration of millions, is artistically fulfilled and most important of all, she can access all the support she needs to manage her condition. Massage, therapy, a break at a spa in Thailand – now that's what I call a social model for mental health!

Would we really be having this conversation if Shirlena had been a wheelchair-user? Would X Factor producers dare to exclude someone on the grounds they couldn't stand to perform? I think we'd find a few writs flying about if that were the case and quite right too. There is, in fact, a chance Shirlena could have had a case for discrimination under the previous Disability Discrimination Act and now, post October 1st, the new Equality Act. The question here would be whether Shirlena had a condition protected by the Act and whether the production company behind the X Factor is an employer or a service-provider.

Liz Conroy, of Conroys Solicitors in Truro, comments: "In a broad sense, X Factor provides a service to the public. It's an interesting question whether they would be considered to provide a service to the contestants. X Factor might also be considered an employer, with the same duties not to discriminate. If the relationship is not effectively of a job applicant, the contestants may have fewer rights. The status of the relationship would need careful consideration."

There is great danger from X Factor bosses and similar trying to decide what is best for people and making assumptions, which may be entirely wrong, that a person with a mental health condition would not be able to deal with the stresses of fame. Because of course, how many so-called 'normal' people lose it altogether under any kind of sustained pressure, fame-related or not? It's not just those with 'issues' that encounter difficulties – so surely the point is to ensure we are better educated about the symptoms of mental ill-health for all our sakes, and are willing to support those who may be suffering. After all, statistics show that it's

likely to happen to all of us at least once in our lifetime.

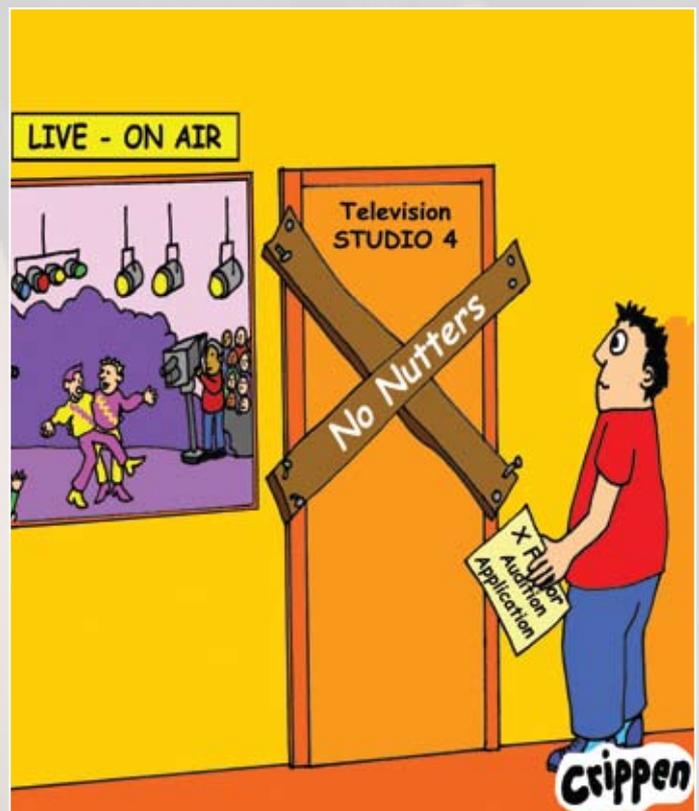
Whether Shirlena has a case or not, it's about time we recognised and celebrated the differences between us. It's hard to think of any major contributor to culture who didn't have idiosyncrasies that might lend themselves to the charge of being ever so slightly 'off kilter', or 'away with the fairies.' What if they had been put through a screening process before being allowed to enrich our world?

So rock on the Shirlenas of this world! we'll take 'fantastically nuts' over routinely boring any day.

If you think you may have been a victim of discrimination contact DIAL for advice and support.

T: 01736 759500

E: dial@disabilitycornwall.org.uk



Cull of the Quangos

More than 300 public bodies or 'Quangos' are due to be either abolished or merged, in an attempt by the Government to improve accountability and cut costs. Below is the current situation, as of October 2010, for those involved in disability issues.

Equality & Human Rights Commission - to be retained but with a focus on core functions and 'better use of taxpayers' money.'

Equality 2025 - will be retained to advise on areas covered by other relevant bodies that cease to exist.

Disability Living Allowance Advisory Board - to be abolished and functions transferred to the Department for Work & Pensions and Equality 2025.

Disability Employment Advisory Committee - to be abolished and functions transferred to Equality 2025.

Disabled Passengers Transport Advisory Committee - to be abolished and The Department for Transport will use other ways to consult disabled passengers.

General Social Care Council - to be abolished.

Independent Living Fund - still under consideration.

Cornwall chosen by National Dementia Strategy Research Team

Cornwall has been chosen as one of eight case-study sites, bringing a great opportunity for the 19 Memory Cafés across the county to evidence the impact they have had on the well-being of people with memory loss and their carers.

The Memory Cafés provide a place where people with memory impairment, their family or carers can enjoy refreshments and socialise, taking part in a range of activities such as conversation, games, quizzes, arts and crafts.

Sue McDermott, Memory Café Network Manager, Cornwall Rural Community Council said: "Memory Cafés are quickly becoming vital and treasured community resources."

One carer said: "I come in with a stranger and go home with my husband."

For more information please contact Sue

T: 07969 902434

www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=20305

Events Penzance CIC

This community interest company organises events in and around the town of Penzance for the benefit of the community. They wish to increase awareness and accessibility for people with varying levels of disability and are looking for ideas for an event in May 2011. If you have any ideas or need help organising an accessible event in Penzance then please call Mike Lovegrove.

T: 01736 351385

E: events@eventspenzance.co.uk

Skills for Care Training



'Skills For Care' recently held a free one day training event at Disability Cornwall's Warehouse Conference Suite, for people interested in receiving Direct Payments or Personal Budgets.

Skills for Care works with employers and training providers regionally and nationally to establish the necessary standards and qualifications that equip social care workers with the skills needed to deliver an improved standard of care.

This was the first event held by them in Cornwall and it covered a wide range of subjects, including recruitment techniques, inductions and funding for training. It proved a good opportunity to network with others and discuss challenges and ideas.

If you are interested in attending a future event please contact Theo Blackmore.

T: 01736 756655

E: theo@disabilitycornwall.org.uk



Sponsored walk for Cornwall Blind Association

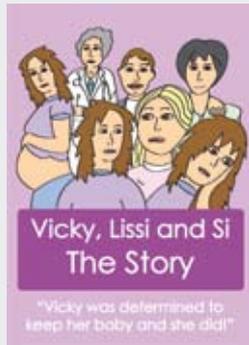
The 'Stride for Sight' will take place on Saturday 19 March 2011 and anyone interested in taking part is invited to contact the CBA's Fundraising Team.

T: 01872 266712

Vicky, Lissi & Si

By: Speakup

A real story about Vicky who is determined to keep her baby despite her learning disabilities and prove to everyone she can be a good mum. The story of her pregnancy and subsequent birth of daughter Lissi is an excellent resource for people with learning disabilities and the people who support them, particularly social workers and health care professionals such as midwives. Vicky has proved with the right support and self-determination, people with learning disabilities can be as good a parent as anyone else. It costs £14.99.



Contact: Adrian Harper
T: 01709 720462
E: adrian@speakup.org.uk

Me-Books or A Book About Me

By: Mewe Press

A new concept in expression for people with learning difficulties, who may find it hard to communicate and/or express themselves, when dealing with health workers or when out in their local community. Me-Books act as a quick referencing guide, enabling the owner of the book to be quickly and effectively understood. They are personalised small printed books based on an individual person and set out in chapters, including likes & dislikes, key medical information and things people need to know, such as behaviour and habits. Once all the individual's information has been recorded, book templates are sent out or trained tutors speak to the individual and their carers, the book is then designed, printed and delivered.



Contact: Richard Ernest
T: 0207 9935308
E: richard@mewepress.co.uk

Name: How to Guides

By: Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum

A series of easy to understand guides, or introductions, to getting active in the community. Some concern traditional volunteering roles, like becoming a Charity Trustee, while others tackle broader subjects, such as making freedom of information requests. Public-facing organisations are welcome to stock the guides.



Contact: John Holmes
T: 01872 241584
E: john.holmes@cornwallvsf.org

The Disability Quick Start Guides

By: Government Equalities Office and Equality & Diversity Forum

These guides are to assist public, private and voluntary organisations to understand their responsibilities around the Equality Act 2010. They help organisations prevent and address disability discrimination and disability-related harassment when providing goods, facilities and services to the public. Guides are also available to help disabled people and carers to understand the protection the Equality Act gives them.



Contact: Government Equalities Office
T: 0303 444 1204
www.equalities.gov.uk

High 5

By: Cornwall Council



High 5 is a newsletter providing information about the main strands of 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' in Cornwall, a grant funded through the local authority, running until March 2011. Information can also be found on both the council and Family Information Services websites or by calling the Family Information Service T: 0800 5878191 and ask a brokerage worker to advise you of opportunities for disabled children and their families. These may include: parent support groups, child care, activities or short break opportunities.

Contact: Family Information Services
T: 0800 5878191
E: fis@cornwall.gov.uk

A guide to running an inclusive and accessible event

By: Disability Cornwall

This guide explains in easy and simple terms that staging events or holding meetings that cater for everyone is probably not as hard or as expensive as you might first think. Covering everything from location and catering to reception and specific disability access needs, the guide is full of information and handy tips. Complete with contact information for relevant support organisations and template examples of booking and equality impact assessment forms. It also lists a range of accessible meeting venues.



Contact: DIAL
T: 01736 759500
E: dial@disabilitycornwall.org.uk

Your questions answered

Q. I'm unable to work and am panicking about benefit sanctions; do I have to claim Universal Credits?

A. DIAL has received several calls regarding cuts and changes to welfare benefits and will cover this in-depth for the next edition.

Universal Credits will apply to all new claims from 2013. The plan is that by 2015 claimants on the benefits below will transfer to Universal Credit which will replace:

- income related employment and support allowance
- income based jobseekers allowance
- income support
- housing benefit
- working tax credit
- child tax credit

The amount of credit will depend on your income and family circumstances.

Conditions are attached to Universal Credit, however if you have a disability or health condition which prevents you from working or preparing for work these may not apply.

This is a very brief overview and at time of publication not all details were released so call DIAL for the latest news and individual information.

Q. When I ring DIAL I always seem to get the answerphone, but I don't really like leaving messages. Can't I just talk to someone in person?

A. We're sorry you feel you don't get to speak to someone when you call DIAL. Our phone lines are open from 10am to 3pm Monday to Friday. When the phone lines are busy, and outside of these hours we always have the answerphone on. DIAL has just three staff members, two of which are part-time, and sometimes we are out attending meetings, outreaches and community talks, so we do rely on our answerphone. Please leave a message, even if it's just your name and number as we aim to respond within one working day when possible.

Although DIAL is primarily a telephone based service we realise some people do prefer to talk face to face, as sometimes it's difficult to explain more complex

issues over the phone and is simply easier to sit down with someone to go through the problem. With this in mind, we operate one 'outreach' session per month in Hayle, Helston, Truro and Bodmin.

These sessions need to be booked through DIAL in advance and are held at Cornwall Council's One Stop Shops, where private interview facilities are available. One hour is allocated to each appointment as we are currently experiencing a large demand and we therefore try to fit in as many clients as possible.

We appreciate transport can be a problem and it's not always easy for everyone to reach the towns in which we run outreach sessions. Obviously you can ring us on our usual number and we'll assist you over the phone and we can also send you information, including guidance on completing benefit claim forms.



01736 759500

Disability Information & Advice Line

Our DIAL service is staffed by fully qualified advisers who offer independent and impartial information, advice and support on any disability related enquiry.

DIAL is free and available to disabled people, their families, carers and professionals. We can assist with welfare rights, benefits entitlement, direct payments and personal budgets, independent living, community care, leisure, education and training enquiries.



T: 01736 759500
10am-3pm Mon – Fri

E: dial@disabilitycornwall.org.uk

Cutting through the spending review

Despite the progress made over the last two decades, disabled people still remain twice as likely to live in poverty, with half of all disabled adults of working age not in paid work. With the axe to welfare spending due to fall, many disabled people will be wondering how the seismic changes taking place will affect them. We highlight the key benefit changes below.

Employment Support Allowance

ESA supports people who are unable to work because of ill health or disability. At present, contribution-based ESA can be paid to people in the Work-Related Activity group until they find work or their condition improves. ESA will, from April 2011, be time-limited, so many people with savings, pensions or a partner who works will lose their ESA altogether after one year. As Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) is also means-tested, many people who lose their contributory ESA will not be eligible to move onto JSA afterwards.

People who are assessed as too ill to seek work and placed in the Support Group will not lose their contribution-based ESA unless they become well enough to move into the Work-Related Activity group.

Disability Living Allowance

DLA mobility component is to be removed from people in residential care. This money assists residents to get out and about, go shopping or visit families etc. With no mobility funding, disabled people with no family or friends nearby could in effect become 'prisoners' in their care homes, unable to get out at all. In most circumstances DLA care component is not payable to people in residential care and their income is capped at £20 a week, so people rely on the mobility component of DLA to be more independent. This cut has been highlighted as the most 'shameful', particularly as transport costs will rise in Cornwall as cuts to subsidies take effect.

Benefit Cap

From 2013, the maximum benefits a household can get will be around £500 a week, whilst for single adults the maximum will be £350 a week, including housing costs. This will not apply where anyone in the household receives DLA, working tax credit or war widows' pension.

Freeze in benefits and Tax Credits

A number of benefits/tax credits will be frozen over the next three years including Child Benefit, the basic and 30 hour elements of Working Tax Credit and the maximum savings credit award in pension credit. In real terms, many people on benefits will see a real

deterioration in living standards as incomes remain static and the cost of living increases.

Tax Credit

The basic and 30 hour elements will be frozen over the next three years. Couples with children must work 24 hours between them for entitlement to Working Tax Credit from April 2012. The proportion of costs covered by the childcare element of Working Tax Credit will remain at 70% rather than rising to 80% as the last government proposed. This is a double whammy for parents with children – not only will parents be less available for their children due to working commitments, childcare costs, particularly in high demand areas, will continue to make a large dent in household income.

Housing Benefit

The decision to raise the single room rate to 35 year-olds could impact on homelessness and will affect single working people on low incomes as well as the single unemployed. The decision to cut 10% from housing benefit if a person has not found work within a year threatens real issues for people who cannot find work despite their best efforts.

The other main changes include:

- Universal credit – over the next two Parliaments the current system of means-tested working-age benefits and tax credits will gradually be replaced with a universal credit
- Child benefit – to be withdrawn from families with a higher rate taxpayer from January 2013
- State pension age – the equalisation of state pension age at 65 will be brought forward to November 2018, and both male and female pension age will increase to 66 by April 2020
- Cold weather payments – the increase in the cold weather payment to £25 will be made permanent.

We understand that benefits are notoriously complex, but DIAL can support you with any queries or concerns.

T: 01736 759500

E: dial@disabilitycornwall.org.uk

Beat the crowds by shopping online this Christmas

By Dawn Houston

Have you given thought to where you will be buying your Christmas shopping this year? As a working parent, I prefer the online experience, with grocery deliveries from one of the main supermarkets delivered right to my kitchen and if you choose your shopping slot wisely, it could cost you as little as £3 – cheaper than the fuel to get to the supermarket. With so many regular stores such as Argos and Boots offering home deliveries, it makes it all the more attractive.

I also find it much more civilised in the evenings when the little ones are in bed to turn on the computer and shop at my leisure. Don't get me wrong, like other strange people I know, I like the odd midnight walk around Tesco Extra when the store is nice and quiet, and I love the whole Christmas experience. I certainly wouldn't deprive my children of the Truro City of Lights Festival, switching on of the lights in various towns & villages, or visiting reindeers when they make an appearance, but would I shop with my children? No thanks!

There are many reasons to shop online, if your condition makes it difficult to carry shopping bags or physically getting to and from the supermarket, or maybe if time or energy levels are an issue, then shopping can be a real chore and especially when doing a large (and heavy) grocery shop.

When first using the supermarket site there is a bit more to do such as registering as a user, putting in your delivery address and any relevant instructions, storing your credit card details and passwords etc, and of course learning how to navigate the site. But once you start shopping, it logs everything you order

and saves it as your favourites. So, you will find once you have visited a couple of times, your favourites list is already there and all that's left for you to do is book your delivery slot and tick the items in the list you require. If you shop with Tesco and have a club card, all that information is stored anyway, so as soon as you start shopping you will find a list of your favourites waiting for you.

Okay, how and when do you get your delivery? When you log on to do your shop, the first thing is to book your delivery slot. You can receive your groceries from 9am until 11pm most days and the more unsociable the hour usually the cheaper the slot. The delivery costs vary from £3 on a late night slot on a Wednesday, to £5.50 on a Saturday afternoon. Delivery slots are offered in two-hour stints, so the maximum time you have to wait in for a delivery is just that.

Keep an eye out for vouchers too, **www.moneysupermarket.com** often details the latest vouchers and special deals and sometimes the supermarkets send you vouchers and offers direct, or offer a free delivery. Be aware of the dates on offer items, as you may find they have expired by the time you receive them and then you will be charged full price. The supermarket may substitute an item for you, if they don't have exactly what you want in stock and may send you the next best thing. (Sometimes useful when otherwise you would find an essential ingredient missing for a planned meal resulting in a trip to the shops anyway.)

When the delivery arrives, the driver will give you a print out of your order which will list any substitutes.

You then have time to check your order as they are bringing it in for you. You can decline any item they bring, if it's an unwanted substitute, damaged, or not what you thought you ordered and the driver will take it back with them. You tend to find the supermarkets are pretty good on this, as they do not want items returned to them as it creates more work. Due to this, you also find everything packed well, frozen foods very frozen and fresh foods fresh. A word of warning is to be careful when ordering what quantity you are buying in, as ordering 'one' in a brand of fresh fruit or veg, may produce just one solitary potato or the like being delivered, rather than the one kilo you expected! I'm sure every hard core online shopper has a story to tell on that front!

For smaller households, maybe you don't need a weekly online shop, but why not consider a monthly delivery for all the bulky or heavier items, such as tins or toiletries, then you can pick up your fresh produce locally as and when you need it?

Online shopping has clearly established itself as part of the Christmas routine, shoppers are proving they trust online delivery by placing their orders closer and closer to Christmas week. Gradually, shopping online is feeling as safe as going to the shops themselves, with more choice and better prices by cutting out the middle-man. Better for us too, as you can feel hungry when shopping online but still not over-order, because as we all know too well, those strategically placed offers in store, coupled with the smell of freshly backed bread and cakes are far too tempting, before you know it you have enough to invite the neighbours for supper!

Support Disability Cornwall whilst you shop

Did you know www.easyfundraising.com is a free service where you can shop online with your favourite stores, and at no extra cost raise funds for any charity, good cause or group you choose to support (please choose Disability Cornwall.) You still shop directly with each retailer as you would normally, but simply by accessing them through this site first, each purchase you make will generate a cash-back donation to your chosen charity.

Spend £25 with WH Smith and 3.5% of it will be donated. You will have raised £0.88 at no extra cost to your purchase. Make any purchase from Amazon and 2.5% will be donated. Insure your car with Direct Line and raise £35.00, or purchase a mobile phone from O2 and earn £17.50 and so on. You can shop with over 2000 brand name retailers and to raise funds you just use the links from this site first - it's that simple!

It seems very generous, but when you buy online the cost to the retailer is much lower, there's no shop, salesperson, heating, electricity, not even the cost of the bag to put your goods in, so retailers are more than happy to help good causes when new online customers are introduced to them via this website.

Please note that your chosen good cause receives 100% of the donation. E.g. the donation rate for Marks & Spencer is 5% of all spend, so your chosen good cause will receive 5p for every £1 spent. You do not pay a penny extra, just the exact same prices as if you visited each retailer's website directly.

Happy shopping and merry Christmas!

DISCOVER *places*

Echoes of the stormy sea





The Lord Nelson is one of two tall ships belonging to the Jubilee Sailing Trust (JST), both purpose built to enable people of all physical and sensory abilities to take an equally active role in sailing.

In September a group of 40 individuals with mixed abilities, from the Echo Centre (a day resource for people with a physical disability in Liskeard Cornwall), set sail from Cardiff to Poole on a trip of a lifetime. The 17 people with physical disabilities were supported by a team of 'buddies' including social workers, businessmen and GPs to name but a few. The intention was to spread the word about what disabled people can accomplish and this was certainly achieved. The total cost of the trip (£25,000) was raised by the group through fundraising events and grants. 385 miles were completed during the week with 50% under sail.

The arrival at Cardiff docks was greeted with nervous anticipation and the group signed on as crew for the voyage. After stowing belongings in the small lockers and perfecting the safety drills, the watch system was explained (four hour shifts during day and night throughout), foul weather gear and safety belts issued (oh boy were we going to need these), and the first unassisted mast climbs commenced. We left Cardiff harbour to head south with Mark ably steering the ship.

Mark said, "We had a fantastic sail and anchored for the night with a view of Coombe Martin on the north Devon coast."

The next day began early with mess duties to complete, food to cook, people needing assistance with washing and dressing, all whilst coping with a rolling boat! We got to grips with the daily 'happy hour,' which didn't involve alcohol, but a thorough cleaning from top to toe; decks scrubbed, brass shone and toilets and showers made to gleam. 'Smoko' was in mid mornings and afternoons, involving drinks and fantastic homemade cakes and cookies made by the chef, Dave, and his team of helpers on mess duty.

Weather-wise, we were blessed with beautiful sunshine and blue skies at the beginning and end of the week, and not so blessed with a force nine gale including a 30% ship roll and plenty of rain, in the

middle! We mastered the art of moving around on a rolling ship. Norma threw her sticks away and walked! "I thought it was wonderful and am amazed that I went up the mast," said Norma.

Mast climbing was exciting, emotional and exhilarating. We saw, we climbed and we conquered, whether in a wheelchair or on foot, whether non-disabled or with one leg. Chris Ward (buddy) said, "When Carl and Pete showed us that one leg can be better than two when it comes to shimmying up a 100ft mast, it was a highlight for me."

The achievements of everyone were immense. Helen and Sean conquered their fear of heights, made it to the top and furled sails on the yard arm. Norma, Charlotte and Donna climbed to the Crow's nest, conquering disability and pain to achieve their goal. David, Louise and Tracy were hoisted aloft in chairs and marvelled at the fantastic view of Dartmouth harbour. But the gold star has to go to Carl, who despite having a leg amputated and severe pain in his existing leg, managed to haul himself to the very top. Afterwards he said: "The climb was hard work and I never thought I could do it. It's made me more determined to move forward with my life."

From Coombe Martin and around Lands End, we experienced force 9 gales and half the crew were sea sick but continued to work, sick bags in hands. Wheelchairs were tied to the deck so the people using them could continue supporting the sailing of the ship. Half hourly checks during the midnight - 4am watch found property flying around cabins, beer loose in the bar and people strapped into their bunks trying hard to sleep through the storm. As Louise said, "Just trying to sit on the toilet was an adventure!" Chris commented, "After most of the crew had been suffering from sea sickness, coming down to breakfast with a full gale blowing and finding the lower mess full of people stuffing down a fried breakfast shrieking with laughter was a high point of the trip."

There were of course some inevitable lows. Charlotte became unwell and had to leave the ship for Torbay hospital, before discharge home to her family. She is now fine but not at all happy about missing the last couple of days of the trip!" There were tears of exhaustion, but overriding these there were peals of



laughter. Tracy said: "The trip has given me confidence and determination to go for what I want, it was fantastic and exhilarating."

The run ashore at Dartmouth allowed for a spot of sight-seeing and frequenting the local hostelrys, although how people managed to complete their watches the following day I am not quite sure! The sail into Poole was in glorious sunshine and there was no doubt that everyone had enjoyed a fantastic trip. The Echo staff and buddies went through a steep learning curve and increased their knowledge of how people can improve their confidence and mobility in a challenging environment and in such a short period of time when pushed to their limits. "I think we all left with a sense of having achieved something," said Jacky. Claire (physiotherapist) said: "Everytime I go, I learn more about leadership and pushing people to the limit of their ability."

But the last words are left to Kathy. "My magical moment occurred when I least expected it, during a night watch sometime after 4am. The instruments read gale force 8-9, with relentless rain, wind and cold biting at us from every angle. We hung on to our safety lines and forced back all thoughts of sea-sickness. Just as I was day dreaming of my warm cosy bunk, I caught a glimpse of my fellow crewmates and saw exhilaration and joy etched on their faces, whilst riding out the storm facing all nature could throw at us. Gone were all thoughts of discomfort and pain, this is what real sailing is all about and I knew at that moment I was privileged to be part of it."

Jubilee Sailing Trust

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Don't beat me with my seeing stick

By Dr Fran Branfield

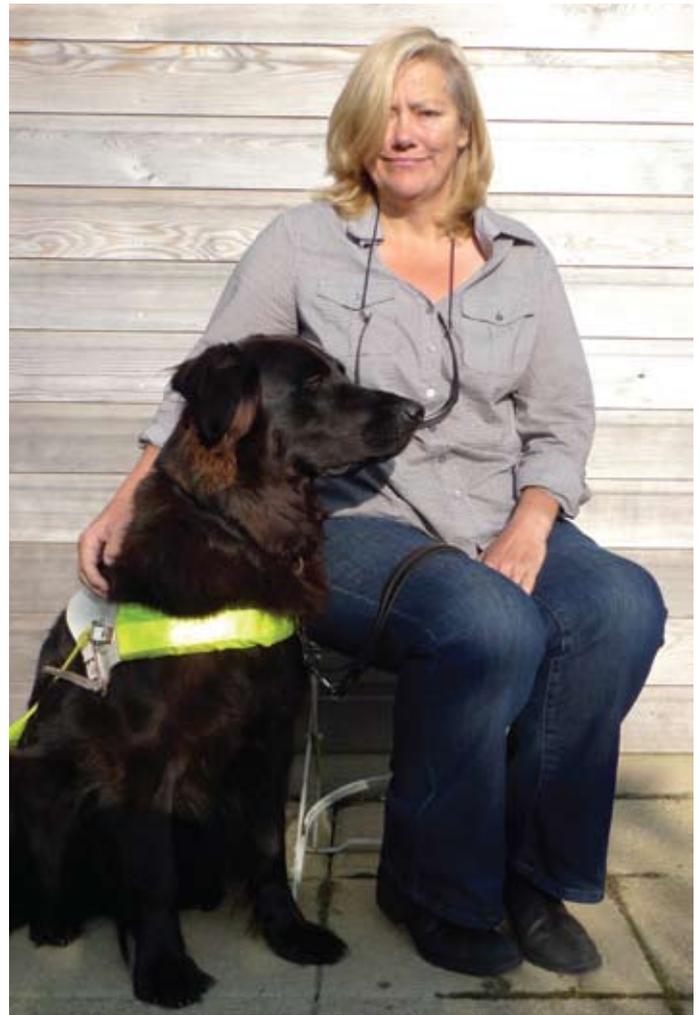
White sticks come in many varieties: a long cane for those who have no sight and two shorter canes – the guide cane and the symbol cane, usually reserved for those whose sight is very poor. Not that the public is privy to these distinctions. A white stick of any size is seen to signify total blindness. When I take my short stick out for a walk, it's presumed I see nothing, but what actually happens is I step into a new reality.

In this new reality I am eminently approachable. Complete strangers come and talk at me: I hear how the man at number 32, just down the road from Martha's sister is blind ("Really – how interesting.") I hear how the next-door-neighbour's father-in-law has recently had a cataract removed. ("Really – how fascinating.") I hear how a woman nearly lost her sight, due to shingles, when she was seven ("Really – how awful."). I hear I'm brave, courageous, admired: a whole catalogue of stories and judgements from people who believe that in return for offering a little sympathy or help, can intrude on me in a way they wouldn't dream of doing when my stick is folded in my bag.

In this new reality I am also deaf, dumb, stupid and often invisible. People speak in raised voices, the rate of speech slows down and if I'm with a stick less person, questions that would normally be addressed to me are addressed to them.

Travelling with my stick from Kings Cross to York, I asked the people sitting in the adjacent seats if the buffet car was up or down the train, the reply "You can't let her go by herself, you go for her." "What do you want dear?" was shouted at me. When I returned, as I had insisted on going alone, I poured the whisky I had just bought, lit a cigarette and faced the window.

"Well, look what she's doing, she's got a whisky – do you think that's alright?" (Alright for whom?)



Fran and Nathan

"Oh she shouldn't be smoking that's very dangerous."

At Doncaster a man entered the carriage and sat down opposite me. We started talking, one of those train conversations both parties engage in to pass the time. Occupations: he was a police diver, I was a sociology student. Politics: he was to the right, I was to the left. It was a good basis for a discussion and before long we were arguing over the role of the police, penal reforms and neighbourhood watch schemes. The group in the four adjacent seats fell silent. I could sense their embarrassment. They were embarrassed on behalf of the police diver who didn't know that I could not see. My stick was folded in my bag and he didn't know.

Embarrassment is never far away. Language itself is full of visual referents.

"I'll see you later."

"Do you see what I mean?"

"But you swore blind..."

People tie themselves in knots of embarrassment when they or someone with them uses such expressions. When I use these 'visual phrases' it seems nearly as bad. Embarrassment for me and embarrassment of me. When I am with my stick people are not sure how to

DISCOVER *people*

react, it makes them uneasy, on edge. As though they are in a state of perpetual fear I might do something which would cause a scene.

Arriving at Kings Cross early one morning, we, (my stick and I) stepped down from the train. A porter appeared. (This is not quite as miraculous as it sounds; it had been prearranged when buying the ticket.) "Taxi?" he shouted at me. "Yes, but..." He was no longer listening. Grabbing my left arm firmly above the elbow, he marched me through the station, shouting as we went "Mind your backs please!" I felt totally out of control. I was angry with myself for not stopping him and telling him he didn't need to have this vice-like hold on me – I had no intention of running off – and there was absolutely no reason for his refrain. Why did all these people need to mind their backs? However, I said nothing and by the time we arrived at the taxi queue I hated this man. I was angry, frustrated, humiliated and embarrassed. He asked me if I would be okay from that point on, or should he wait in the queue with me? As far as I was concerned he could have left me in the fast lane of the M5, just as long as he left me! Yet I was supposed to be grateful to him for getting me across the

station. I was supposed to thank him.

During the first year I was registered blind, I was endlessly thanking people. When I am carrying the stick people presume I'm helpless and thus in need of their help. The fact I may not require help is of no importance. If, as in the instance on the train, when I turned down my fellow passengers' help and went to the buffet unaided, people are offended. Sometimes it is easier to accept the help, and fall into the role of the defenceless, grateful, blind girl. By giving me a role to play, others know their lines and I know what is expected of me. I know the rules of this game and rule one is that I do not ad lib. I must remain faithful to the script. By rejecting offers of help I am way off script, and the most common way of rationalising my transgression is the 'poor girl she's so proud, she really has to prove she can cope, we're only too willing to help her, but she won't let us' syndrome.

I'm told I must have remarkable hearing and a pronounced sense of smell. Admittedly, I might use these senses to interpret my surroundings more than I once did, but these senses have hardly taken on the super-discriminating qualities that others assume they have.

In addition to these heightened sensory perceptions I have apparently developed a sixth sense. This allows me to 'sense' objects in front of me. It's surprising how widespread this belief is. Perhaps the idea of blindness is incomprehensible to a sighted person. People repeatedly tell me that if they were to go blind they would not be able to cope. However, once they can attribute this sixth sense to me then the idea of blindness takes on another quality. One that is alien, not human, but serves to reassure the sighted person.

When it is discovered that, although I have a white stick I have some sight, people feel cheated. When I fold up my stick and open a book, people who moments before were telling me their 'blind' stories, giving me their sympathy, pity and judgements, turn away:

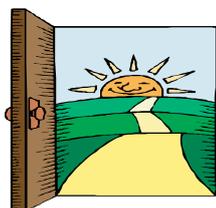
"Well really! I thought she was blind."

"What does she think she's playing at?"

I turn a page and adopt the best defence I have for combating the perils of near blindness: I feign deafness.

Fran wrote this article 20 years ago not long after she became visually impaired, back when she used to smoke, even on trains! She now prefers to use Nathan, her guide dog, rather than a white cane.

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Don't tolerate hate crime



'Disability Hate Crime and how to get involved' is a publication produced by United Kingdom Disabled People's Council (UKDPC) and calls for Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPOs) to do more to raise awareness of disability hate crime. It describes how to report a crime and where victims can find

support. Anne Novis, the leading activist for UKDPC states the importance for DPOs and their allies to provide services and influence the way hate crime is dealt with. Anne says "Raising the issue of disability hate crime can make a huge difference both locally and nationally. Crimes should be reported and the more people who do this, the more records there will be."

A reminder of The Crown Prosecutions definition of disability hate crime is: Any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's disability or perceived disability.

If you or someone you know is a victim of a hate crime, please report it. This can be done anonymously and even if you don't have all the information needed to complete the incident form, any information you provide is valuable.

Disability Cornwall's DIAL advisers will assist people to compile reports, collate them for statistical purposes and pass the information onto the police if requested. Even if you don't want to take the incident any further it is important to still have the crime recorded for accurate reporting on how many hate crimes are committed within Cornwall. DIAL is not connected to police services so serious crimes that need immediate action should be reported directly to Devon and Cornwall Police T: 08452 777444.

'The bigger picture' report also produced by UKDPC, recently provided evidence for the Equality and Human Rights Commission inquiry into the extent of targeted hostility towards disabled people. At the moment, not all police forces are monitoring disability hate crime so this report relied on media sources for the collection of evidence. The report highlights that at times of recession and social change the focus on disabled people can become very hostile as people fight for jobs and limited resources. The language used about disabled people by our leaders also has

its impact. It can take just one government minister using a derogatory term about disabled people or making statements about fraud, to encourage a belief that people are justified in targeting disabled people in hostile and violent ways. It is hoped that this evidence, along with all the other evidence EHRC gather, will jump start a collection of strategies, policies and action plans at local and national level to ensure that disabled people obtain their human rights, underpinned by the social model, and profile the perpetrator rather than deciding it's disabled people's 'vulnerability' that is the cause of the hostility.

The UN Convention on Human Rights for disabled people states that disabled people are entitled to the same and equal justice as others and freedom from harassment and attacks due to identity or difference.

Hate crimes are violations of the human rights of disabled people and a direct attack on a person's identity. If society already believes disabled people's lives are of less value it takes only a little more nudging to incite hatred and encourage hostility.

By recognising the language of hate used against disabled people and choosing not to accept it when you hear it, you too can stand up to hatred!

The social media facebook site, Disability Hate Crime Network, brings to the forefront daily experiences of attacks, harassment, and murders of disabled people. It is a glimpse of what disabled people can experience all the time and well worth logging onto for up to date news stories, campaigns and events. You will read about disabled peoples frustrations, dis-empowerment, and the lack of response when they report an incident. You will also read the abuse faced by many as the government disparages disabled people and perpetuates the stereotype that disabled people are a burden, work-shy and fraudsters.

UKDPC state that 'Enough is Enough,' it is time to understand and address how this perpetuates and incites hostility and would like us all to think about what we can do to help.

Report it and you make a difference, not just for you but for all disabled people.

Useful numbers for crisis support are listed in the directory section of DISCOVER. For emergencies contact Devon and Cornwall Police T: 08452 777444, please relay your story to DIAL Cornwall for collation of accurate statistical recording about disability hate crime in our county.

The Hills Are Alive

Just because you have a disability does not mean you are unable to go on holiday, but having personally had a period of increased weakness, I had lost a lot of confidence in my ability to transfer and this had impacted on my level of independence. This obviously began to affect what myself and my wife could do, and how far we travelled in this country let alone abroad. For this reason we looked at supported travel and decided to try a trip aboard a 'Jumbulance.'





As the website www.jumbulance.org.uk states 'with all the special facilities in a Jumbulance you can travel safely and in comfort all day and throughout the night subject to EU Regulations, with no need even to leave the Jumbulance when crossing the Channel if your disability or illness makes it inappropriate to do so.'

The Jumbulance Trust suggest several holiday destinations, including Le Fosso, Rome, Cracow or where we opted for – Niderau in Austria. Ultimately, it is up to the individual groups where they decide to travel on their holiday.

Our trip started from home in Falmouth, travelling to Hull where we joined the rest of our group. With only 24 people you might think it is not a big group, but as anyone with any significant disability will tell you, by the time you have packed everything including the kitchen sink and multiply that by 10, plus the 14 helpers ... that's a coach load of gear and people! Although packed, the coach is comfortable with an accessible toilet and kitchen area. Combine this with easy access by platform lift, stretcher trolley beds, reclining seats, ample storage for wheelchairs and luggage, mobile hoist, full air conditioning plus comprehensive emergency medical equipment including oxygen, defibrillator, suction and resuscitation units. You can travel with the knowledge that your individual needs can be met.

We sailed from Hull aboard a P&O ferry, a 12 hour overnight voyage through some fairly lumpy seas, arriving at Zeebrugge early the next morning. The length of the ferry journey meant we did need to leave the Jumbulance and use the accommodation aboard the ferry. The ferry was a bit of an old tub, to be honest. Whilst it was 'accessible' this was, in my view, a very broad interpretation of that word. The cabin was tight on room as was the bathroom

and whilst the accommodation did make overnight travel possible, it was a little uncomfortable.

Arriving early next morning, we travelled through Belgium, Germany and into Austria with the landscape changing from relatively flat to hilly, arriving in Niderau in the Alps 12 hours later. The hotel boasted good access with well appointed rooms and a fully accessible wet room. The downside was that both the bed and toilet seemed very low, a point remarked upon by several of those travelling. Another issue, especially with Austria is the cost of everything. The Eurozone exchange rate is no longer as attractive as it was a few years ago, add to this the additional cost of living in Austria and you arrive at €4 for a pint of beer, glass of coke or wine.

Not cheap.

The next day was a planned rest day, but it coincided with a local religious festival celebrating the arrival of the cows brought down from the mountains to the relative shelter of the valleys during the winter.

Our second day saw us taking a trip to Lake Achensee. It was a brilliant day, great weather and just stunning scenery all at a height of 929m. The Achensee is a lake north of Jenbach in the Tyrol. It is Austria's largest lake and has a depth of 133 metres. Together with the Achenal valley, it is part of the Karwendal mountain range. A truly beautiful place.

The third day we opted for Innsbruck, another great day of weather and a beautiful city nestled at the foot of the Alps. Amidst the charming Old Town, a classic Austrian hybrid of Gothic and Baroque, you find Innsbruck's greatest tourist attraction and certainly its most characteristic landmark, The Golden Roof. It's a great place to sit amongst the many street cafes and while away an hour or two taking in the atmosphere.





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Our fourth day took us to Krimml waterfalls. With a total height of 380m in three stages, the Krimml Waterfalls are the highest waterfalls in Europe. The Krimml River is the source as it begins at the end of the Krimml River Valley and flows through gentle pastures before plunging down the mighty steps as a subglacial stream. It is a 10-minute walk on the paved path to the lowest waterfall. Not the easiest push in a wheelchair coming back up the valley, but worth the sore muscles the next morning!

And so our holiday continued with various trips out and about, even passing Brendan and the passengers on the Channel 4 show 'Coach Trip' as they travelled through the Brenner Pass into Italy.

Our journey to the Austrian Tyrol through Belgium, Germany, Austria, Italy and returning back to Holland over seven days, a distance of some 2500km aboard a Jumbulance, might not be everybody's first idea of a relaxing holiday away from it all, but if you have never been away on holiday and have a disability or limiting illness, then this just might give you the confidence to travel, or to even go it alone next time.

If this article interests you and stirs a desire to do something similar aboard the Jumbulance, get in touch with the Disability Cornwall office. Who knows, if enough people express a desire to travel, we might be able to put together a trip.

By Steve Paget

Mum uses Facebook to raise awareness of epilepsy



Six months ago Lisa Nicholl took the controversial decision to post footage of her daughter Savannah enduring an epileptic fit online.

Savannah, four, suffered a rare form of leukaemia and almost 100 epileptic seizures in the past year alone. She only survived after Lisa campaigned vigorously for a bone marrow donor. Every time she has a seizure her mum fears the worst. Lisa made the decision to put videos of Savannah during a seizure on a specially set up Facebook page to help others whose children were suffering from epilepsy and to raise awareness of this life threatening condition.

Surprisingly, epilepsy is not an uncommon condition; it affects 1 in 130 people, that means nearly half a million people in the UK have epilepsy with 75 new cases diagnosed every day. Sadly, in 60% of those cases there's no obvious cause, 70% of people with epilepsy can control their condition by medication, but the remaining 30% may have to use several different combinations of anticonvulsant drugs.

Lisa told DISCOVER, "Epilepsy kills more people than sudden infant death syndrome and AID's together yet there is not enough awareness about how serious epilepsy really is, and how it affects people's lives. Adults and children can suffer from over 40 types of fits and yet the government spend less than £10 per year on epilepsy research per person!

What is epilepsy? The body has electricity running all over the place, electric currents in the brain, heart, muscles and nerves, but with epilepsy you have abnormal electrical activity in the brain disrupting messages going from cell to cell and into the brain. There are about 40 different types of this condition, due to the electrical activity affecting different parts of the brain.

Triggers that can set it off can be lack of sleep, missing meals, stress, excess alcohol, alcohol withdrawal and having low blood sugars, especially in diabetics.

The general causes of epilepsy are injury to the brain at birth, head injury in later years, meningitis and encephalitis (which are inflammations of the brain lining), tumours and in older people, strokes. The important thing with epilepsy is to be on the right medication, maybe have your medication changed, or new medication added to, and always be under the control of a neurologist who is a specialist in this area.

Epilepsy awareness and support:

www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=114922858546567

Behind Savannah's eyes:

www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=158121047543293

Epilepsy Action in Cornwall

Is the largest member-led epilepsy organisation in the UK, supporting people with epilepsy, their families, friends and carers. The charity has two branches in Cornwall - one in Truro and one based in St Austell. The branches provide local support to people affected by epilepsy. Run by volunteers, the branches hold regular meetings and offer a mixture of social events and informative talks and discussions.

For many people with epilepsy, a sense of isolation and a lack of understanding can be a problem. Attending local branch meetings offers the opportunity to talk to people who understand these problems. They also provide a chance to help raise awareness of epilepsy in the local community.

The Truro Branch meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 7pm at Truro Town Hall. The Mid Cornwall Branch meets on the third Monday of every other month at 7.30pm at Penwithick Social Club, Penwithick, St Austell.

Epilepsy Action is represented in the Cornwall Alliance of Neural-Domain Organisations (CAN-DO). The volunteer-led alliance supports the interests of people with neurological conditions in Cornwall. It campaigns for better health services, raises awareness and acts as a voice for people affected by neurological conditions.

Further information

For more information about Epilepsy Action's work in Cornwall and the south west, contact Mark McDaid.

T: 01291 621478

E: mmcdaid@epilepsy.org.uk

For information about the Truro Branch of Epilepsy Action, contact Nathan.

T: 07791 702883

For the Mid Cornwall Branch, contact Jean.

T: 01726 850162.

pimp my chair



'That Paralympic Show' showcased potential Paralympians and was aired on Channel 4 earlier this year. 'Pimp My Chair' was a regular slot featuring a small group of charismatic sporting 12 – 18 year olds who wanted to turn their current wheelchairs into something a little more special. Freddie Parkes from Truro was chosen from the hopefuls and had his wheelchair pimped this summer! He tells DISCOVER the story.

I'm 17 and a full time power chair user. I'm away at Lord Mayor Treloar College in Hampshire doing my A levels. A while ago I was sent an email from my mum, forwarding information from Disability Cornwall about a TV show that was looking for young sporty wheelchair users.

She basically told me to do it myself if I was interested as she was too busy to help! Charming I thought, but decided as I'm a) young b) play football for Celtic Storm (Cornwall's power chair football team) and c) a bit sports obsessed, I should go for it!

A few weeks later, I had a phone call from a guy called Liam from Boomerang TV asking me lots of questions and a couple of days later I got a call to say I had been chosen! My mum was a bit stunned as she had forgotten about it and even more surprised when I told her I was organising everything! Filming began at the beginning of July. Liam and a camera man followed me around all day and I got to play football on camera. They asked me about my life, likes and dislikes. One thing puzzled me, how were they going to get my chair to Cardiff for the 'pimping' as the only car I had seen was a Ford Fiesta! It came as no surprise when it didn't fit and a few days later a van was sent.

We had a couple of delays, but finally at the end of July my family and I travelled to Cardiff for the big 'reveal.' We were told it would be about 2pm, but after

a panicked phone call from Liam a later time of 4pm was agreed. Just one problem, my mum only had the office number with her and the staff were all out at the industrial estate with my chair, and all mum could remember was that it was on the outskirts of Cardiff, somewhere! No panic said mum, they will call us soon. No panic? They had my chair!

But sure enough at 3.30pm they called to see if we were on our way so panic over. We still had a wait of nearly two hours though on the hottest day of the year, sat in a car park on an industrial estate in the middle of nowhere, due to the other chair they had pimped being revealed first. Who says TV is glamorous? But I did get to meet a couple of sporting stars – James Hook, Welsh rugby player and Jamie Baulch, former British athlete.

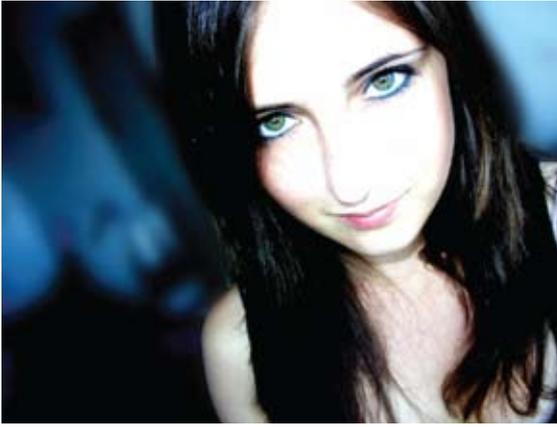
My concern was my new 'pimped' wheelchair would turn out to be an armchair; my mum's concern, it would be too big to go in the van! When we finally got to see it, wow, it was amazing! Racing green spray job, Aston Martin gear knob and wing mirrors, a leather back box, a notebook computer that flipped over and a PSP to name just some of the features. Pretty flash and a massive improvement on the scruffy chair with broken lights they had taken away two weeks before.

My mum's fears were right, the pimped chair was too wide for the ramp and her face was a picture! So, I was quickly relieved of my wing mirrors!

I could not say enough thank you's to everyone as I knew they had worked long days to get mine and the other chairs finished on time. The Trike Shop and John from RIP customs worked their butts off to get it done, so A BIG THANK YOU from me.

The programme was an experience and if you want to see the results search for: 'That Paralympic Show' presented by Rick Edwards from T4 and Ade Adepitan the England wheelchair basketball player.





Katie

Disordered mind difficult relationship

Imagine loving someone, but then the next week not being able to remember what that felt like? You know you love them, but you can't feel it? All you feel is nothing. A big apathetic nothing in that space where your heart once was.

"I love you, even though at times it may not seem like I do and I may not act like I do, it's just the depression I get regularly because of my Bipolar."

Imagine actually trying to say that? I don't know about you, but trying to make your partner understand that sort of complicated feeling isn't easy, and I know I would struggle to comprehend it if it was the other way around. That's because it isn't easy to understand, but neither are our own minds, so what difference would being Bipolar (or being on the Bipolar spectrum) make to your relationship?

As Bipolar (manic-depressive disorder) causes serious shifts in mood, energy, thinking and behaviour, it isn't altogether surprising that it can affect your relationships to a possibly damaging degree. Maybe because love is more of a feeling, an emotion, you would think it isn't as affected by matters of mind as some things are? But love can reside as much in the mind as in the heart, if not more.

Apathy, indifference, lack of sexual appetite, fatigue and irritability are all common symptoms of depression and phases of these can make it increasingly difficult to maintain a consistent relationship. Your partner or people close to you can spend so much of their time and energy trying to make you happy that the stress becomes too much and they feel they can no longer cope, which results in the breakdown of the relationship. When this happens, the bipolar partner can regress even further into their symptoms and become vulnerable.

As we all are so different, I have no idea if people feel the same way I do, but I'm pretty sure there will be those who do. When I'm in a depressed phase, I can become withdrawn, antisocial, disinterested and I can feel nothing for the person I profess to love. I could sit there and look at them and feel an absolute nothing, sometimes even disliking them or worse, for no reason. Sometime later however, when a hypomanic 'buzzy' phase kicks in, well, that's a different story!

And while it isn't easy for us, with the see-sawing psychological issues going on, it isn't painless for our partners or the people around us either. There are websites and support groups for those who have to deal with bipolar relatives or partners, and these can be brilliant, but flat words on a page aren't enough and won't begin to describe how difficult it can truly be to be around someone like that.

"Your partner becomes hard to predict and they react in ways that are extreme enough for you to doubt their feelings for you. They say they love you, but you don't see it and they don't show it. Understanding their problems is hard to conceive. It seems certain they no longer love you."

That quote was from someone who struggles with the ups and downs of life with a bipolar partner, before and after they realised she was bipolar. Even though the likelihood of divorce is twice as high in bipolar individuals as the general population, it doesn't mean you should give up on your relationship. You have to learn to control it to the best of your abilities, although this isn't easy. Communication is vital and set routines can be very helpful if both partners are driven to sustaining the relationship. You just have to try and deal with it the best way you can and find out what works for you.

➔ Easily Accessible Routes

Stretching from Bodmin, the Camel Trail is arguably the county's most famous walk and for this edition we take a look at one section of it, Wadebridge to Padstow.

The Camel Trail

KEY FACTS

- ➔ **Directions:** From the A39 take the turn-off for Egloshayle and Wadebridge and proceed through the town until you come to a mini-roundabout. Turn left and cross Wool Bridge, then turn right onto Quay Road. At the next mini-roundabout you'll see the start of the trail, turn left to park.
- ➔ **Parking:** Use the pay-and-display car park next to Lidl supermarket, near the Bridge Bike Hire Shop. Alternatively there is a long stay car park in the centre of town off Polmorla Road.
- ➔ **Terrain:** The surface is smooth, although not tarmac, making it suitable for wheelchairs and is virtually level for the whole distance. Even during the most adverse weather large percentages of the trail will remain in good condition.
- ➔ **Distance:** Wadebridge – Padstow is 5¼ miles and takes about 45 minutes to cycle or 2 hours of leisurely walking.
- ➔ **Refreshments:** Although nothing along the trail, there is an abundance of pubs, cafes and restaurants in both Wadebridge and Padstow.
- ➔ **Public Toilets:** Available in the car parks at the beginning and end of the trail.
- ➔ **Ordnance Survey**

Map No:

OS Explorer series 107 with a grid reference for parking at Wadebridge of SW 980729 and for Padstow SW 917753.





➔ SETTING THE SCENE

In 1899, the railway line from Wadebridge to Padstow was laid, forming the route of the Atlantic Coast Express, starting at Waterloo and carrying thousands of holidaymakers to the West Country. The railway was also used to ship fish, slate and china clay from inland quarries to ships in Padstow for transport to London and other cities. When both quarrying and fishing died off, the railway lost most of its traffic. The last train to ferry passengers was in 1967 with freight finally ceasing in 1983, when a need to invest in a new track forced closure of the line.

➔ ALONG THE WALK

The Camel Trail was built about 18 years ago on the track bed of the old railway line and is about seven miles long and level nearly all the way. The trail follows the Camel Estuary to Padstow and visitors can easily hire bikes in either Padstow or Wadebridge. A Changing Places facility is located with the toilets at the start. It's impossible to go wrong with the directions for this walk, just keep following your nose! The ride should take you about 45 minutes or about two hours at a leisurely walking

pace, unless you make frequent stops to admire the view and you should!

There is an extraordinary array of wildlife that can be seen along the trail from foxes to otters and plenty of flowers at the right time of year with violets and snowdrops appearing as early as December some years. The River Camel supports salmon and trout and on the estuary live bass and mullet. Bird watchers need to keep their eyes peeled for dippers, kingfishers, curlews and an ever increasing number of little egrets, which now live alongside the local herons. For about the first two miles the Camel Estuary is fairly narrow with mud flats, so look out for estuary birds such as cormorants, herons and terns and a bird hide gives the opportunity to view the wildlife without being seen.

After a while the Estuary widens out and is less tidal so there is a lot of boating activity, while the trail winds its way through an old stone quarry. Giant heaps of abandoned slate rise on either side and the ancient jetty is still visible in the river.

A lot of money has been spent refurbishing the bridge crossing Little Petherick Creek with a substantial three-span iron girder bridge. Rusted iron work has given way



to a smart coat of paint and the narrow wooden deck has been replaced by a broad concrete one, much easier for today's style of traffic.

Approaching Padstow there are spectacular views across to Daymer Bay, Pentire Point and Rock. Once the fourth most important port in the country, Padstow is quite spectacular no matter what time of year or what state of tide. It's still very much an active fishing village with all the hustle bustle and charm associated with commercial fishing. Add to this Rick Stein's influence, ferries across to Rock, speed boat and fishing trips and the general ambience of a holiday town and it's hardly surprising the majority of Camel Trail users head to this pretty village.



The Cornwall Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre exists to deliver a wide range of treatments and therapies along with the support and fellowship to those who are living with Multiple Sclerosis, their families and their carers'.

The new Centre opened its doors in April '09 and gives clients access to otherwise illusive, life enhancing orthodox and complimentary therapies.

Although principally for those with M.S., many other conditions are treated, including, Arthritis, M.E., Sports Injuries, Fractures, Tinnitus and much more.

All are welcome to use the Centre if they feel they will benefit from any of the following treatments:-

- High Dosage Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Osteopathy
- Aromatherapy
- Reflexology
- Facial Reflexology
- Deep Tissue Massage
- Spiritual Healing
- Counselling
- Yoga
- Pilates



For more information on how the Centre can help you, contact us on:-

Bradbury House
Hewas Water
St Austell
Cornwall
PL26 7JF

Telephone:
01726 885530

Email:
merlinproject.org.uk

Website:
www.merlinproject.org.uk

charity number:
1093691

The Cornwall Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre



merlin project



The benefits of massage

Massage has been one of the most important factors of my life for more than 14 years and it may sound profound, but without massage, I really don't think my physical and mental capabilities would have been able to keep up with the progression of my medical condition.

Ironically, a few years before I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) in 1994, I had trained to perform therapeutic massage. Shortly after my diagnosis I began looking for a trained masseuse whose hands worked on me and with whom I could establish a programme that would develop around my changing capabilities. It took nearly two years before Rosemary began regularly massaging me.

A lot of passive movement is incorporated into each session as it is several years now since I've been able to independently move my legs and feet. By Rosemary physically moving my legs into various positions, a semblance of muscle tone and circulation is maintained; this now applies to my left hand and arm, which no longer move as they should.

Constipation has become an increasingly common inconvenience in my life, which is now alleviated by Rosemary massaging my abdomen. Being a full time electric wheelchair user, my neck and shoulders can be prone to stiffness especially in winter and it's by having my arms passively moved which frees me up.

Prior to passive movement of my legs, Rosemary massages my head and face, which relaxes me and combined with controlled breathing, has an incredibly calming effect on my mental composure. This is reflected in my daily activity, which involves running a small business, as well as being an active voluntary contributor to many local groups and organisations. Massage keeps my mind and body centred.

By Trevor Palmer



Rosemary consulting with Trevor prior to beginning a massage

Massaging Trevor has been a continual process of adapting to changing conditions. At first Trevor had massage on a massage couch and the challenge was to find comfortable positions and the right pressure to use; too light being tickly and irritating, too heavy being painful. Most attention was directed towards the legs, which were tight and stubborn and especially the left foot, which tended to turn inwards.

Today Trevor receives massage in his electric wheelchair which has the facility to raise and recline. This has the advantage of being able to be moved to different heights and angles, to enable me to do abdominal massage with him lying almost level, or passive leg moves in a more upright angle. I massage his head and face from a high sitting position behind the chair and when working on his feet, I can sit on a low stool.

I always begin working on his feet as they are often in pain due to sore pressure points. I find massage quickly restores circulation to one foot in particular, which is often nearly blue, and helps relieve the swelling to some extent. Massage of the calf muscles assists the lymphatic system and begins the relaxation process most effectively, feet being laced as they are with so many receptive sensory nerves.

I find the more Trevor can relax and leave me to it, the less spasm occurs and the easier it is to exercise his legs. Lately, I found by accident, his legs were even less resistant after a face massage, which we used to leave until last. The face and head massage is the most profoundly relaxing, benefiting mood and positivity generally. A real luxury I think, giving a feeling of 'TLC' and not to be underestimated, even more so now I've discovered relaxation can be used to facilitate passive movement.

I believe regular massage helps both physically and emotionally and each are equally important. Massage helps maintain joint mobility, assists circulation, has a positive effect on the digestive system and helps maintain a buoyant attitude.

By Rosemary Thomson

Cornwall Mobility Centre

*The Key to Freedom
and Independence*



Access
assessments



Wheelchairs and
scooters

Driving
assessments
and tuition



Vehicle
adaptations



Paediatric
Department



Independent
Living
Centre

Adaptations/mobility
equipment
service and repair



We are a Not For Profit organisation offering a fully professional service

Tel: 01872 254920 email: mobility@rcht.cornwall.nhs.uk

Tehidy House Royal Cornwall Hospital Truro TR1 3LJ

National Advice & Information Line
Freephone: 0800 559 3636



Double success for the Champs team

A group of people with learning difficulties have won regional recognition for their pioneering work in helping to improve access to NHS services in Cornwall. The Cornwall Health and Making Partnerships (CHAMPS) team scooped two awards at the recent South West Health and Social Care Awards, including the overall regional title.

The CHAMPS scheme started in June 2009 and recruited 10 people each with a learning disability, to act as health champions for NHS Cornwall and Isles of Scilly, the first time a PCT has recruited local people with learning disabilities into permanent paid employment, to help shape the way services are developed.

The CHAMPS team not only won the category 'Support for Independence,' but were also named overall winners in the South West with Special Recognition award for a project that stood out from all the other winners.

Ebonyrose Thomas, one of the CHAMPS team, said: "I am so proud of working for the NHS and to be part of the team. I'm over the moon we have won both awards – to have won just one would have been amazing but this is totally unexpected. Being in the CHAMPS gives me a confidence boost and my favourite part is the feeling of being proud of the work the whole team does and how well we are supported by the rest of the staff."

The Health and Social Care Awards highlight and celebrate excellence and innovation across health and social care and encourage working together across organisations and professions, with those using services and the local population. The CHAMPS team were recognised for having made a valuable contribution in supporting primary care and hospital workers to improve their care and support of patients with similar disabilities.

The team was created after MENCAP published a report called 'Death by Indifference' in 2006, highlighting the damaging consequences of the poor health services received by learning disabled people. The government, in response, commissioned a report (Healthcare for All) and referred cases to the Health Ombudsman who also produced a report called 'Six Lives'. All of these documents described the need to recognise that people with learning disabilities can have significant and

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly **NHS**
Primary Care Trust



WINNERS: From left, Ben Law, Ebonyrose Thomas, and Rhiannon Morris collect their awards from Charles Howeson, chairman of the South West Strategic Health Authority

challenging health needs and for positive steps to be taken to ensure these issues are recognised, reasonable adjustments are made and health outcomes for them are on a par with the wider population.

The CHAMPS team act as 'experts by experience' for the health community. They were recruited to: Provide advice, guidance and training for service providers and clinicians. Support self-advocacy groups, carers and individual service users. Provide fully recognised employment of learning disabled people within the NHS.

One of their major objectives was to improve employment opportunities for learning disabled people, making it easier for them to apply for, be interviewed and actually get jobs. The CHAMPS team achieved this by helping NHS Cornwall and Isles of Scilly to redevelop its recruitment and induction processes.

Other significant work comprised the production of easy read documents and DVDs, speaking at conferences, delivering staff training, improving hospital accessibility and supporting health planning groups for service users, focusing on healthy living and self care.

Joe McEvoy, Deputy Director of Partnership Commissioning at NHS Cornwall and Isles of Scilly, said: "I am absolutely delighted. These awards recognise the hard work and commitment of all the CHAMPS team and the real impact they are having in shaping local services. Their dedication helps to ensure that people with a learning disability are getting good health care, and I'm thrilled these awards recognise that. I would like to congratulate all the team."

New funds available for mental health projects

The Council of Governors of Cornwall's first and only NHS Foundation Trust have announced the availability of one-off grants of £50 to £500 to individuals or organisations working to improve the quality of life for people in Cornwall living with mental health problems or learning disabilities.

Chris Bell, Deputy Chair of the Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Council of Governors, outlined the criteria for The Governors' Grants at the inaugural Annual Membership Meeting in Bodmin. He said: "Every year 8,000 people in Cornwall receive specialist mental health treatment from our Trust. We are eager to support projects which encourage innovation in the field of mental health care in the community, as well as initiatives that tackle the stigma and social exclusion people living with mental health problems so often experience." He went on to say, "If you believe you can deliver ground-breaking work which can be replicated or disseminated to help others and if you have good ideas but find it is difficult to secure funds, we want to hear from you."

The Governors' Grants – with communities in mind will be awarded at the end of January 2011. Grant application forms must be submitted by 31 December 2010. To receive an application form, please contact Vicky Wood.

T: 01726 291011

E: vicky.wood@cft.cornwall.nhs.uk

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Photo courtesy of Jan Leslie

PALS staff Janet Hart and Carol Steer

Your PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a free confidential service, listening to concerns patients, their relatives or carers may have and run by NHS Cornwall's Primary Care Trust. It signposts as appropriate and can provide an alternative to talking to someone directly involved in the situation. PALS can give information on what NHS services are available, offer advice and support on a huge range of health issues, act impartially to handle concerns when patients don't feel they are getting the service or information they need, and will liaise with staff on behalf of patients to negotiate a solution. The emphasis is on providing a prompt, workable solution that suits all parties.

A typical day

I usually get into the office around 9am, check for any messages left overnight and invariably the phone is ringing straight away...

"My husband needs to go to London to see a specialist but we can't afford the train fare, is there any way you can help?" Several phone calls later, two travel warrants in the form of train tickets, are on their way to Mrs Smith.

"I'm fed up with that receptionist looking down her nose at me; I want to make a complaint about her attitude!" We have an in depth discussion about how this situation can be resolved. Mr Jones decides he will speak with the GP practice manager to tell her how upset he feels;

she should be able to sort this out effectively so the situation is improved for everyone. It is surprising how often reception staff have no idea their mannerisms are causing offence – just a little more training can make such a difference...

A call from an NHS dentist. "Can we have an interpreter to come to an appointment with a patient who doesn't speak any English? It's urgent for this afternoon please." An interpreter is booked via the local staffing agency; luckily we can arrange this for today as the patient is in pain with a swollen face.

A call comes in from reception. "A lady has come in asking to speak with PALS, can you come down please?" I find an empty private room and go down to see the visitor. The lady tells me, "I'm going on holiday soon with my daughter and her family and will be going out for meals. I can't eat properly at the moment because my denture is loose and keeps falling out; it's really embarrassing. I'm not registered with an NHS Dentist, what can I do?" We discuss options – registration with an NHS Dentist is not as difficult as it used to be and I offer to contact a couple of practices to see if PALS can persuade anyone to see this lady in the near future. My third call is successful. The patient is given an appointment the following week and goes away relieved.

The quarterly PALS report needs to be prepared for the next Primary Care Trust (PCT) Board meeting. An important part of the job is to look out for themes of problems coming into the PALS office. We report serious problems and emerging themes to PCT senior managers and do our best to make sure services are acting on the concerns patients tell us about. The phone is ringing again.

"Hello, I wonder if you can help me as I don't know where to turn, do you tell anyone I've called? I don't want to upset anyone." I reply as we always do. "Talking to PALS is completely confidential and we never talk to anyone without your permission and agreement. The only time we would ever break a confidence is if you were at serious risk of harm. Tell me what is happening and I'll try my best to advise and help you decide what to do..."

It was a lengthy call but I think the patient has got a lot off her chest and has gone away to consider her options. I'll ring her again tomorrow to see if she has been able to make any decisions feeling all too aware of how difficult it must be when you have no one to talk these things through with.

I can't believe it's 5pm already and must quickly write up my 'to do' list for tomorrow before I leave.

By a PALS Case worker



Independent review says it was right to move cancer services

The controversial transfer of specialist cancer services from Cornwall to Devon was in the best interests of patients, an independent review has ruled.

Although critical of the local NHS for lack of public consultation, the inquiry set up by former Health Secretary Andy Burnham said the move provided a 'safe, sustainable and accessible' service. The plan to relocate upper gastro-intestinal cancer operations from Cornwall and Exeter to Derriford Hospital in Plymouth had created anger in Cornwall but still went ahead.

Campaigners have voiced 'disappointment, surprise and concern' at the findings of the report and one group is considering making a legal challenge.

Health Secretary Andrew Lansley yesterday accepted the report by The Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP), which put forward eight recommendations, to be implemented within six months. The most scathing criticism was made about the lack of public engagement. The local NHS did not carry out a public consultation and the panel emphasised the need for health organisations to involve patients.

The report found that more work needed to be done to improve access from more remote areas such as West Cornwall, where patients face a journey of up to 170 miles to get to Derriford. Currently, financial help for the journey is capped at £20, although a review is under way. In its recommendations, the IRP said travel should not be an 'unnecessary anxiety to patients and carers at a very difficult time.'

The findings also advised that the NHS locally should continue to work to provide services closer to patients' homes, and should create a partnership to establish how patients' experiences can improve the cancer service.

Anthony Farnsworth, Chair of the Peninsula Cancer Network, acknowledged the criticism about the lack of consultation, but said health authorities were driven by the need to implement higher standards of cancer care in the west country.

But Graham Webster, of campaign group Health Initiative Cornwall, said he will now seek legal advice and may challenge the findings of the report. "We're disappointed for the patients of Cornwall, who now have no choice but to travel to Derriford to fight this condition, possibly without their loved ones by their side for support."

He voiced surprise that the Secretary of State for Health had backed the proposals, despite plans to abolish most Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities (SHA) in an NHS shake-up. He added, "Clearly nobody thinks the PCT and SHA are fit for purpose, therefore what confidence can we have in their decision?"

Cancer campaigner Rose Woodward voiced 'bitter disappointment' at the report, which she said made no mention of the patient experience. "It's obviously a cold, hard NHS report, for NHS people," she said. "There's no realisation that we are dealing with people in extreme distress as opposed to numbers."

But Paul Upton, Royal Cornwall Hospital's Trust (RCHT) Medical Director, said the report highlighted the move was 'in the best interest' of patients. "We have moved on from where we were, particularly as we move towards becoming a foundation trust. As part of that process, we will have much more public consultation."

Andrew George, Lib Dem MP for St Ives and the Isles of Scilly said, "I believe a more co-ordinated service, sharing expertise, was desirable. But managers still had a choice: either the patients could get in their cars or clinicians would have to. This decision has taken patients and their families further from their homes."

However on a more positive note, plans to create a specialist gynecological cancer centre in Truro to treat women from Cornwall and Devon are now being reassessed to ensure they comply with the latest guidelines. According to officials from the Peninsula Cancer Network, the decision to create a specialist centre at the RCHT is not under review but is being measured against new guidelines to see if it fits the criteria. The guidelines mean factors such as transport and costs to patients will have to be considered along with surgical outcomes.

A recent review by the IRP on the transfer of upper gastrointestinal cancer surgery to Derriford Hospital found in favour of the move but called for more robust public consultation and better transport facilities for patients.



Self-Care in Cornwall

One in three people in the UK live with a long-term condition; that's 15 million people with conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, or problems with getting about.

Self-Care is about getting the support and information needed for people to manage their long-term conditions in positive and proactive ways. Self-management means better outcomes for individuals as they maintain independence and well-being, and it benefits communities through more efficient use of resources.

Why is self-care important?

As we get older we develop conditions that make day to day life more of a challenge, particularly in our beautiful rural geography! Our joints may become painful, or breathing more laboured. Of course not all poor health can be prevented or delayed, but we can reduce the risk of developing some diseases, such as diabetes and stroke by, for example, eating a balanced diet, taking regular exercise, drinking alcohol in moderation and avoiding smoking. These steps help reduce our risk of developing a long term condition and, even if we are already living with a long term illness, taking the right action can help delay the increase in symptoms and lead to a better quality of life. Better self-care can reduce the need for emergency hospital admissions, the number of times

people see their GP or the amount of medication needed.

Of course no-one can become an expert in their condition overnight and people will require support from health, social and voluntary sector services with information, activities and signposting to specialist support providers. Many individuals have been supported through self-care to have much better control over their symptoms and as a result, are now able to get out and take part in everyday activities such as going for a walk and shopping. Self-Care is about helping people to achieve and maintain independence and do the things that are important to them.

It's not always easy

There are many reasons why people find it difficult to take control of their lives including a real (and understandable) wish to be 'made better,' or a reluctance to accept the reality of the situation. It can be hard too, for people to ask for help but, with the right support, real benefits in health and well-being can be achieved, sometimes in quite short spaces of time.

For more information, contact your GP or a local specialist support organisation (details in the back of DISCOVER) or visit www.selfcareincornwall.nhs.uk

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Keep warm healthy and safe this winter

Winter has arrived and here are some thoughts on how to keep warm, eat well and save money in this current climate of cut backs and uncertainty.

Wrap up: layering is the key to keeping warm and several layers will trap heat between them. Your first should be a lightweight material that doesn't trap perspiration from your skin, it's the 'wicking' layer which should wick the moisture away from your skin leaving it dry. Look for items made from silk, wool, or even man-made materials designed specifically as a first layer. Your second layer is the insulation, it's the part that will hold in the heat and keep out the cold. A soft wool sweater or a polar fleece top will trap air between the insulation layer and the wicking layer and help to keep you warm. Wearing socks or leggings will help to keep your legs and feet warm too. The Disability Living Foundation has fact sheets and brochures available for disabled people looking for practical warm clothing.

T: 020 72896111
www.dlf.org.uk

Stay healthy: it's important to have a warm home that's free of damp and mould. One way to keep heating costs down is to make sure your home is well insulated. Fit draught-proofing to help seal gaps around windows and doors, insulate your property to reduce heat loss and have your heating system serviced annually. If you are spending more than 10% of your income on energy then you are in 'fuel poverty,' check to see if you are getting all the benefits you are entitled to. Call your energy supplier to see if you qualify for a social tariff, but remember sometimes online tariffs can actually be cheaper.

Call Community Energy Plus (T: 0800 512012) for free energy advice and information about grants for insulating your home. The Home Heat Helpline is an independent telephone service that helps people who are struggling to pay their energy bills or keep warm in winter. This free service is staffed by trained advisers who can provide information and advice on keeping warm and using energy efficiently, as well as social tariffs and payment plan options.

T: 0800 336699
www.homeheathelpline.org

Eat well: regular hot meals and a healthy diet make a big difference to your health at any time of the year, but it's particularly important during winter. Winter comfort foods like soups, stews and casseroles do much more than just fill you up, they help to fuel your inner thermostat and warm you from the inside out. Eat plenty of protein to keep the metabolism fired up and burning fuel and spicy foods like chilli and curries all cause your body to run hotter than normal too. If you are on a special diet, talk to your doctor before you make any changes to what you eat or drink. If you are not able to cook traditional meals, the choice in pre-packaged food is pretty varied these days and a lot more palatable. Or why not try Wiltshire Farm Foods or Oakhouse Foods who are specialist food providers that deliver direct to your door?

Contact DIAL if you need more information.

For information on healthy eating visit www.eatwell.gov.uk

Keep well: flu vaccination is one of the simplest and most effective ways of protecting the health of older people, and those with chronic conditions and long term illnesses, during the winter. Those 65 and over and in at-risk groups are entitled to the free flu vaccine and should contact their GP surgery.

Keep safe: accidents and injuries are other common features of winter and the number of slips and trips at home always increase. Carrying out some basic safety checks in your home will help reduce potential hazards; tape down rugs, frayed carpets and trailing wires, fit handrails on stairs and keep your home well lit. It's important that electric blankets and smoke alarms are tested regularly to ensure they are still in good working order.

Finally: keep an eye on relatives and neighbours during winter, as even if you are coping well, others might not. When visiting, check their home is warm and they're wearing appropriate clothing. If the weather worsens and people are unable to leave their homes, keep in regular contact over the phone, they may need extra help or support to get groceries in or just may need a chat.

Just a Thought...

Leaving your stereo on standby can cost you more than £20 per year.

Running a computer for six hours a day every day (have you got teenagers?) can cost you more than £40 per year.

DISCOVER information & advice

Cornish Community Banking helping local families

This year, Cornwall's largest credit union launched two new services to keep the county's poorest people out of the hands of loan sharks. Cornish Community Banking (CCB) decided to act, to combat rising levels of debt in rural areas, which result in legal and unlicensed doorstep lenders preying on low income families.

Citizens' Advice Bureau research showed household debt is a growing problem in Cornwall, with the average now approaching £9,000, excluding mortgages. Under the CCB scheme, members can borrow up to £600 at interest rates far below the extortionate terms demanded by some loan providers – which can involve up to an astounding 2,600% of interest!

The move follows a two-year pilot in which loans were made available on signing up with deposits of £2 or more.

Katrina Wagstaff, spokesperson for the CCB said, "In the past you would have to wait for 13 weeks to be

eligible for a loan. That's no good if you are a single mum on low income with two children and your washing machine breaks down. The money is needed straight away. If we couldn't lend it to them, then they would end up borrowing it from the doorstep lenders and in the long run, end up paying a lot more money."

In another move aimed at alleviating poverty, the CCB has launched the Credit Union Current Account (CUCA), allowing many people to be able to set up direct debits for the first time, giving access to cheaper utility bills. If you are looking for a fresh approach to banking then this could be for you. You can have your salary, benefits or pensions paid in directly and enjoy 24 hour, access to your money every day, via an ATM. CCB can manage your direct debits, standing orders, bill payments and fund transfers. With a Visa Debit, subject to eligibility, you can shop online or at millions of shopping outlets, with the option of cash back too. A more honest and ethical way to manage your finances, with a friendly and efficient member service at all times. There is a weekly fee of £1.15 which is charged to cover the cost of maintaining the account, chargeable monthly.

For more information contact CCB

T: 0800 0556873

**E: ccbadmin@cornishcommunitybanking.co.uk
or see their Facebook site.**

CREATIVE IN CORNWALL

CREATIVE MINDS
INSPIRING FUTURES

Working or studying at Falmouth is a unique experience. Our excellent teaching and facilities for Art, Design, Media and Performance, inspirational surroundings and a commitment to improving access and inclusion set Falmouth apart as the perfect place to develop your talent.



For more information contact our **Diversity Office**:
T: 01326 213843 / E: diversity@falmouth.ac.uk

www.falmouth.ac.uk



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Project part funded by ERDF

University College
FALMOUTH
Incorporating Dartington College of Arts

Celebrating the life of...

In many ways 2010 has been a good year for Disability Cornwall, but in others very sad, as this year more than any other we have lost people we knew well. Each and every one played a role in the development of our organisation and here we pay tribute to them and remember their passing, just how they always remembered Disability Cornwall when they were with us.



Joyce Bunt: Her five grandchildren would often say when asked where they had been, "Oh, just hanging out with Gran." Joyce was family orientated and very involved in her local community of Gorranhaven. She was instrumental in organising the 'Day on the Sand,' a fun beach day which resulted in Disability Cornwall receiving its first public donation. Joyce was passionate about access for disabled people and fundraised for improvements to the local village hall, passionate indeed, about everything she was involved in and always gave 101%. Known locally as 'the lady that swam in the sea,' as arthritis notwithstanding, she would swim every day so even the summer visitors now miss her.



Will Crocker: : The Team Manager for the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS), died unexpectedly, leaving a gaping hole among those committed to protecting the rights of people given a poor service by the NHS. Will always gave the best possible service himself and was enormously respected by all who knew him, including Disability Cornwall. Will's advice and support to the very many of our members affected so harshly when outpatient physiotherapy services were unexpectedly withdrawn in 2006, was vital. His knowledgeable and calm presence as the patient led complaint reached the Healthcare Commission, was a constant source of great strength and support.



Les Croft: This photo of Les was taken on Christmas Day last year, just after he was told he only had six weeks to live. It was typical of Les that he wasn't ready to go just then and passed away in his own time six months later. Les was a key member of the steering groups supporting Disability Cornwall's earliest projects, West Cornwall Lifestyles and our first website. He

was a unique character, never afraid to make his views known and his input and effort were invaluable. He helped to ensure our then fledgling charity developed an accessible website and that disabled people in the west of our county could find suitable volunteers to enable them to enjoy a more independent lifestyle.



Rowen Jade: An internationally known disability rights leader who was pivotal in communicating the views of disabled people at a national level. As chair of Equality 2025, she was chief adviser to the government on disability matters and held a key position of influence with ministers and civil servants alike. Disability Cornwall facilitated a key meeting for Equality 2025, at which Rowen heard the views of local people to help shape national policy. She also campaigned for independent living and the use of direct payments. As someone who needed 24 hr. support herself, Rowen clearly exemplified the disabled people's mantra – nothing about us, without us.



Paddy Johnson: Together with his wife, Diana, Paddy was a well-known and active campaigner in the local disability movement and a stalwart member of the old forum events in St Austell. Sport was very important in Paddy's life and over the years he took part in local darts leagues for various pubs and competed for Redruth Archers. He won awards at the national Archery Championships in 1999 and more recently bowled for Carnon Downs bowling club. But it was his role with CLASP (Cornwall Leisure Activities & Sports Players) for which he was probably best known, assisting greatly to maintain the presence of disability sport countywide.



Ian Thomas: Taken ill as a baby with profound effects on his coordination, Ian only learnt to walk when a young boy, but it didn't hold him back from achieving high exam grades and later becoming a member of MENSA. He trained as an engineer and in his spare time had a passion for carriage driving. Ian was an active member of his community, Marazion near Penzance. He was awarded the British Empire Medal in 1989, the Whitbread Community Care Award the same year and also attended a Buckingham Palace Garden Party. Ian was equally active with the CDF and did much to raise awareness about the needs of disabled people, campaigning tirelessly for access to services for everyone



Cornwall Deaf Association

There are over 90,000 people in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly with hearing loss. The Cornwall Association for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People is managed by an Executive Committee comprising Deaf and Hard of Hearing People and is not affiliated to any national organisations. We rely on voluntary contributions, donations and legacies.

People with hearing loss often find themselves isolated and cut off from social contact, even within their own family. Familiar comments may be: "I find it too humiliating to try to mix with people so I have become a recluse." Or, "My husband and I have no social life because he hates going out. If we do, he can't cope and although I try to understand, we end up having a row. The strain is ruining our marriage."

We can encourage people to make an appointment with their GP to have their ears checked and if appropriate, be referred for a hearing test to ascertain whether hearing aids may be of benefit. We encourage people to persevere with their hearing aids even though they may feel there is a stigma attached to wearing them. Our organisation may make a referral for the technical officers employed by Cornwall Council to make a visit to someone's home to arrange for equipment, such as a flashing doorbell, fire alarm, or personal hearing loop systems to be fitted.

Libraries, banks, post offices, anywhere in fact that the public can access should have hearing induction loops installed and we can provide information about this equipment.

Many people with hearing loss lip-read and we can give information about lip-reading classes in some parts of the county which people can attend to improve their lip-reading skills.



Truro Lions Club President, Clive Pearson, presenting a ramp for the new Cornwall Deaf Association offices

Hard of Hearing people are welcome to join Hard of Hearing Clubs in Falmouth, Liskeard and Newquay, offering socialising opportunities and support for people who can share their experiences of dealing with hearing loss.

British Sign Language (BSL) is a visual language with a distinctive grammar, using a combination of hand shapes, facial expressions, gestures and body language to convey meaning. Under the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act, service providers are responsible for payment of BSL interpreter services and our office can assist with booking of BSL interpreter appointments at GPs, hospitals, college courses, etc. We can also give information with regard to British Sign Language classes held around the county.

Our new office is still located in Truro, but we travel county wide giving talks and delivering Deaf and Hard of Hearing Awareness training to organisations.

T: 01872 225868

E: cornwalldeaf@btconnect.com

Enable in Cornwall Ltd

Enable in Cornwall is a registered charity working with people aged 16 and above who have a physical disability and/or sensory impairment and live in Cornwall. We offer free information, advice, guidance and support to assist clients in overcoming barriers they may face in accessing training, education, voluntary work or paid employment. Moreover, we devote the time and resources necessary to empower disabled citizens to assume active and purposeful roles in their communities. Enable is part of a vision committed to the transformation of Adult Social Care so the phrase 'putting people first' can become a reality.

We freely facilitate people who are disabled by their environment to gain more power and control over their lives. Self-help is enabled through clients identifying their own goals and deciding what support they need to gain employment, undertake a voluntary activity or attend a training course/ educational programme.

Our project is managed by a Board of Directors, of which a majority are disabled people. This is of fundamental importance to our work as we believe only disabled people can fully understand the barriers disabled people face when trying to access training and work.

- We offer a free service to which people can self-refer or be referred by other organisations.

- Some clients are disabled from birth while others have had accidents or strokes in later life that have forced life changing circumstances on them and their families.
- Each client has an adviser who develops a relationship suited to the needs and aspirations of the disabled person.
- Advisers visit clients in their own homes, an informal discussion then takes place as to what they would like to achieve and an action plan is completed.
- Advisers research available options, addressing issues like transport and funding where necessary.
- Assistance is available if required for compiling CVs.
- Job searches are undertaken by advisers to ensure no opportunities are overlooked.
- If required, advisers will accompany clients to interviews or support them during their first day at training courses to help with the paperwork etc.

When clients have been placed in work or training Enable staff continue to keep in regular contact until clients decide they no longer need support. Therefore, the organisation provides a comprehensive service geared to the priorities of individuals with the intent of making permanent and positive changes to their lives.

T: 01208 77711
E: enableincornwall@aol.com

Kernow Positive Support

More than 83,000 people are living with HIV in the UK but a third of them don't actually know it.

HIV is a virus that attacks the body's immune system – its defence against diseases. Coming to terms with a HIV diagnosis and getting used to treatment can be very difficult. People living with HIV may find it hard to tell others about their condition, or worry they'll experience prejudice from those they know. This prejudice is often the result of ignorance about how HIV is passed on and an unfounded fear of becoming infected. You can contract it through infected blood, semen, vaginal fluids or breast milk, not from kissing, coughing or swimming. To prevent infection, you should use a condom and not share injecting drug equipment.

Kernow Positive Support (KPS) is the only charity based in Cornwall that specifically supports people living with, or affected by, HIV and AIDS. Our services are wide ranging and we try to reflect each of our clients own individual needs.

Our services include: housing related floating support, therapies, counselling, a hardship fund, peer support,

a helpline, advocacy and representation and HIV awareness training.

Trebullom

There is an increasing need for HIV services to develop and cater for the specialised needs of those who face discrimination and stigma. Short-breaks and respite catering for those with HIV have proven to be extremely beneficial, providing somewhere safe and secure for an increasing number of vulnerable people.

KPS Trebullom is our brand new national retreat and respite centre. The Grade II listed farmhouse is now at the final stages of its extensive refurbishment and the official opening is planned for the 4 February 2011 to celebrate our seventh anniversary. It sits in lush countryside between Bude and Launceston, surrounded by organic land, with scenic views and blissful tranquillity. Fresh local food and various workshops will also be available.

KPS Trebullom offers a cost-effective respite solution and place for retreat to those applying for funding from their local statutory and voluntary agencies. Funding bodies will have the safe knowledge their clients will receive professional care and support. Our respite facilities are also available to those wishing to self-fund.

The Hub

KPS has an office in the special HIV facility at the newly built Sexual Health Centre, 'The Hub,' at the Royal Cornwall Hospital, Treliske with a discreet entrance so clients can have absolute privacy if they wish.

Our small team works tirelessly to personally help everyone who needs support but we are always looking for volunteers. Opportunities are open for decorators and other positions at Trebullom. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Helpline: 01208 264866
E: admin@kpsdirect.com



Trebullom

CHANGING PLACES

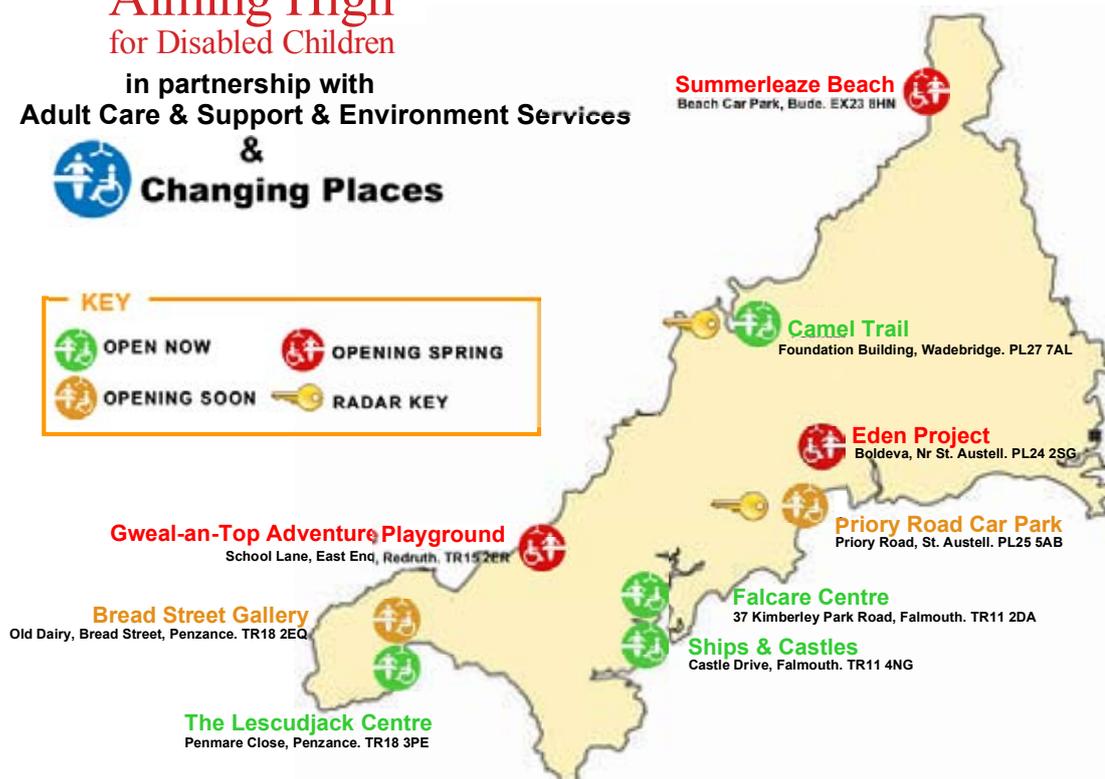
Aiming High for Disabled Children

in partnership with
Adult Care & Support & Environment Services



KEY

- OPEN NOW
- OPENING SPRING
- OPENING SOON
- RADAR KEY



Changing places are for people who cannot use standard accessible toilets because they require more space and the right equipment, including a height adjustable changing bench and a hoist. These are the changing places currently available in Cornwall.

RADAR KEYS
The RADAR key will allow access to all Changing Places as well as over 7,000 locked disabled toilets throughout the UK. They are available from all council offices and most One Stop Shops, and a £3 service charge is required. For more information visit your local council office or log onto www.radar.org.uk

Are all the public toilets on your RADAR?

Well maybe not this lot, as none actually require a RADAR key! Over the previous five editions of DISCOVER, we have featured the accessible public toilets in every district of Cornwall and listed below are those available in the final district of Carrick. These toilets are either open for 24 hours or 'seasonal' (8am – 8pm in winter and until 10pm in summer.) Summer is regarded as running from the week before Easter until October 1st or the end of that particular week.



Chacewater	Car park	Just as you drive in on the right	24 hrs
Feock	Loe Beach	Located in the ladies at the back of the car park area	24 hrs
Falmouth	Grove Place	On the left of the car park	Seasonal
Falmouth	Gyllyngvase	In the ladies on the path at Gyllyngvase beach	Seasonal
Falmouth	Prince of Wales Pier	In the ladies on the right of the pier	Seasonal
Falmouth	Webber Street	In the ladies at the top, just off The Moor	Seasonal
Falmouth	Swanpool	Opposite the beach on the corner of the road.	Seasonal
Mylor	Waterings Road	Entrance of the playing fields	24 hours
Penryn	Permarin	At the top of the car park	Seasonal
Penryn	Exchequer Quay	At the entrance	Seasonal
Porttowan	Car park	On the right	Seasonal
Portscatho	River Street	On the slipway to the beach	24 hrs
St Agnes	Trelawney car park	At the top of the car park	Seasonal
St Agnes	Trevaunance Cove	At the top of the slipway to the beach	Seasonal
Truro	Malpas	On the left of Boscawen Park playing fields	Seasonal
Truro	Lemon Bridge	At the bottom of Lemon Street near the Piazza	Seasonal
Truro	Moorfield	At Moorfield Car Park	Seasonal
Truro	Old Bridge Street	At Old Bridge Street car park	Seasonal
Truro	The Green	At the bus station site near M & S	Seasonal
Truro	The Leats	At the back of WHSmiths	Seasonal
Veryan	Carne Beach	At Carne Beach car park	24 hrs

Further information available from Cornwall Council T: 0300 1234100 E: customerservices@cornwall.gov.uk

SPORT & LEISURE



Photos courtesy of Toni

Big fun at the beach

A beach day organised by NHS Cornwall and Isles of Scilly and supported by the Cornwall Sports Partnership took place in September at North Fistral Beach in Newquay, for people with learning disabilities and their carers.

The day offered a range of fun for attendees from across the county, with games organised by Cornwall Sports Partnership, including beach volleyball, beach soccer and tag rugby. Local surf school, Freedom Surf, was on hand to offer taster surfing lessons at the free event.

Kirsty Butterly, an adult with learning disabilities who attended the day, said: "Surfing was good fun and I had never tried it before. I was nervous at first but then really enjoyed it. The beach day was a really good idea and I met lots of new people."

Away from sport, groups had the opportunity to go rock pooling while the Health Promotion team was on hand to talk about sun safety and healthy living.

Mark Hill from Freedom Surf, said: "We are really proud to be part of the event and to help raise the profile of freedom from disability through surfing."

Steve Hillman, Disability Sports Development Officer for the Cornwall Sports Partnership, said: "The day has been fantastic! All the participants really enjoyed themselves and I was very impressed with the level of enthusiasm during the beach sports. The volleyball went down a real storm and the tag rugby raised a few heart rates – running on the sand isn't easy!"

Jo McEvoy, from the Community Health Service, added: "This was a fantastic event and a great opportunity for both adults with learning disabilities and their carers to enjoy a day at North Fistral's beautiful beach, and try out something new. It was great to see everyone enjoying themselves!"

The day's organisers extend a big thank you to Euro Beach, Fistral, for allowing all attendees free car parking spaces and access to their facilities.

DISCOVER *sports*

A high-angle, close-up photograph of a young child with wet hair, wearing a black and blue wetsuit, lying on their stomach on a bright yellow surfboard. The child is smiling broadly and has their fists clenched in a playful, determined manner. The surfboard is positioned on a blue wave with white foam. The brand name 'FLOWER RIDER' is visible on the side of the surfboard. The overall scene conveys a sense of joy and freedom in a water sport.

Surfing for freedom



Photo courtesy of Anne-Marie Hughes

An exciting new accessible surf event has rolled into action on the Loop Flow Rider at the Retallack Resort & Spa, near Wadebridge. The first ever 'Surf 4 Freedom' gave over 30 participants the chance to have a go at surfing on the specially constructed surf simulator. Bad surf and weather conditions meant the event, which was originally planned to be held on Fistral beach in Newquay, nearly didn't happen, but the Retallack Resort & Spa saved the day with a kind offer to play host, free of charge at their Loop Flow Rider instead.

Organised by Cornwall Sports Partnership, Freedom Surf, The British Surf Association and student Hayley Boulden, the 'Freedom for Surf' project has been set up to offer people with disabilities the opportunity to learn to surf.

During the morning, participants received some excellent tuition and coaching from Carl, Gethin, Morwenna and instructors at the Loop. They then went on to compete in a fun competition in the afternoon. This gave all participants the perfect opportunity to impress the crowd with their new moves and signature manoeuvres; which were rewarded by everyone receiving medals and prizes during an awards ceremony at the close of the event.

Steve Hillman, from the Cornwall Sports Partnership, said: "Today has been fantastic, judging by the smiles on the faces of the participants and on the faces of the parents and carers. I can safely say everyone has had a brilliant time. The set up here at the Loop is incredible and I'm already looking forward to next year's event."

It wasn't just the participants who had a great day; parents and carers watched with excitement and pride as they witnessed some amazing achievements of those taking part. Following the event's success, the organisers



All photos by Geoff Squibb unless otherwise stated

DISCOVER *sports*

hope it will become an annual event and that a disability session or club will be established at the Loop to enable participation on a regular basis.

Mark Hill, from Freedom Surf commented: "The ethos behind Freedom Surf is to use surfing and the water to give freedom from disability. Today on the Flow Rider we have seen just that and it's amazing!"

The organisers extend their thanks to everyone who attended, several surf equipment retailers and Retallack Spa Resort for hosting the event. If you would like further information on surfing activities for young disabled people, please contact Steve Hillman or Mark Hill.

E: shillman@cornwall.gov.uk

E: freedom.surf@hotmail.com



This is me

This is me
 No saint am I
 But hard I try
 To faithful serve
 Jehovah
 The God I believe
 This is me!

This is me
 A wife, a Mum
 A daughter
 Sister, aunt
 A friend
 I hope a good one
 This is me!

This is me
 I am a poet
 And yes
 I know it
 This is me!

by Meg Bailey

The Butterfly

I watch as the butterfly emerges from her slumber
 The life before she can no longer remember
 Unfurling her wings in the midday sun
 For the butterfly her journey has just begun
 As she flutters her wings I smile and think that it won't be long
 A gentle breeze and she will be gone
 With each tentative beat of her wings her new life calls
 The leaf no longer an island to the beauty in store
 A breath of wind the time is right
 As I watch her wings dance out of sight
 Life is so much more than what we perceive
 We too are like the butterfly
 If only we would believe

by Nigel Basher

Maybe we have made progress after all!



Photo courtesy of the South West Disability Show



Sudoku

		8			1		3	
		6				8		
4		5			7			
			8			1		5
	8		2		9		4	
1		7			6			
			7			4		6
		2				5		
	7		9			3		

Crossword and Sudoku answers on page 82

The Christmas Party Memo

MEMO FROM: Patricia Harris, Human Resources Director
TO: All Employees DATE: 1 December 2010 RE: Christmas Party

I'm happy to inform you the company Christmas Party will take place on 23 December, starting at noon in the private function room at the Grill House. There will be a cash bar and plenty of drinks and a small band playing traditional carols, please feel free to sing along!

Don't be surprised if the Managing Director shows up dressed as Santa Claus! A Christmas tree will be lit at 1pm. The exchange of gifts among employees can be done at that time however; no gift should be over £10 to make the giving of gifts easy for everyone's pockets.

This gathering is only for employees. The Managing Director will make a special announcement at the party. Merry Christmas to you and your Family, **Patricia**

MEMO FROM: Patricia Harris, Human Resources Director
TO: All Employees DATE: 2 December RE: Holiday Party

In no way was yesterday's memo intended to exclude our Jewish employees. We recognise that Chanukah is an important holiday, which often coincides with Christmas, though unfortunately not this year. However, from now on we're calling it our 'Holiday Party.' The same policy applies to any other employees who are not Christians. There will be no Christmas tree or Christmas carols sung. We will have other types of music for your enjoyment.

Happy holidays to you and your family, **Patricia**

MEMO FROM: Patricia Harris, Human Resources Director
TO: All Employees DATE: 3 December RE: Holiday Party

Regarding the note I received from a member of Alcoholics Anonymous requesting a non-drinking table...you didn't sign your name. I'm happy to accommodate this request, but if I put a sign on a table that reads, "AA Only," you wouldn't be anonymous anymore! How am I supposed to handle this, somebody?

Sadly, we have to drop our plan for the gift exchange, since Union Officials feel that £10 is too much money and Management believe £10 appears a little cheap. Therefore, no gift exchange will be allowed.

Kind regards, **Patricia**

MEMO FROM: Patricia Harris, Human Resources Director
TO: All Employees DATE: 4 December RE: Holiday Party

I have had several responses to my last email and didn't realise what a diverse group we are!

I had no idea that 20 December begins the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which forbids eating and drinking during daylight hours. We appreciate how a luncheon at this time of year does not accommodate our Muslim employees' beliefs, perhaps the Grill House can hold off serving your meal until the end of the party - or else package everything up for you to take home. Will that work?

Meanwhile, I've arranged for members of Weight Watchers to sit farthest from the dessert buffet and pregnant women will be allocated the table closest to the toilets. Gay men are allowed to sit with each other but Lesbians do not have to sit with gay men, each will have their own table. Yes, there will be flower arrangements for the gay men's table, too. To the person asking permission to cross dress, I'm afraid this is not allowed.

We will have booster seats for short people. Low fat food will be available for those on a diet. We cannot control the salt used in the food. We suggest those people with high blood pressure taste the food first. There will be fresh fruits as dessert for diabetics but the restaurant cannot supply 'no sugar' desserts. Sorry!

Did I miss anything?! Kind regards, **Patricia**

MEMO FROM: Patricia Harris, Human Resources Director
TO: All b**y Employees DATE: 5 December RE: The ***** Holiday Party.**

Vegetarians, I've had it with you people!! We're going to keep this party at the Grill House whether you like it or not, so you can sit quietly at the table furthest from the 'grill of death,' as you so quaintly put it.

You'll get your b***** salad bar, including organic tomatoes, but you know what? tomatoes have feelings, too. They scream when you slice them. I've heard them scream. I'm hearing them scream right NOW!!

Hope you all have a rotten holiday.

MEMO FROM: John Bishop - Acting Human Resources Director
TO: All Employees DATE: 7 December RE: Patricia Harris and the Holiday Party

I'm sure I speak for all of us in wishing Patricia a speedy recovery and I'll continue to forward your cards to her.

In the meantime, Management has decided to cancel our Holiday Party and instead, give everyone the afternoon of the 23 December off with full pay.

A work in progress



The Work in Progress team (from left to right): Jeff Davies, David Burns, Kathleen Alldis, Roxanne Sutherland, Vicky Brown & Suzy Tucker

Cornwall People First have been awarded a Big Lottery grant to run an inclusive research project examining how people with a learning disability are supported into employment. Only about 1 in 10 people in this group have any form of paid work and yet many say they would like to work. The project will attempt to identify what strategies are best suited to support people with a learning disability into work.

A secondary but important aim of the project is to ensure it's led by people with a learning disability. In keeping with the mantra 'nothing about us without us,' the project will fully involve people in all aspects of the research and demonstrate how, with support, research can be effectively led by people with a learning disability.

The research team will be talking to people who have signed up to Cornwall Works for Learning Disabilities and interview participants as well their families, carers, employers and co-workers to find out about their experiences.



Do you or someone you know have a learning disability?



- Find out about getting paid work
- We can help you find a job
- Get advice about how working might affect your benefits and allowances

For more information, please call:

01736 334857

or email: cornwallpeoplefirst@hotmail.co.uk



Cornwall Works for Learning Disabilities (CWLD) is a supported employment programme with investment from the Convergence European Social Fund in partnership with Job Centre Plus. Led by Cornwall Council and four learning disability organisations based in the county, (Cornwall People First, Brandon Trust, Home Farm Trust and United Response.) Each partner organisation represents a national charity assisting people with learning disabilities to make informed choices about their futures and opportunities for employment. Much of the programme's success is achieved through the support of a team of job coaches who work one to one and liaise with employers ensuring work opportunities meet the needs of the clients.

The programme was able to help achieve a dream job for keen swimmer Ben Procter. Since the age of 14, Ben has represented Great Britain on six occasions in the World Championships Learning Disability category, winning many gold and silver medals and achieving over 12 British, 4 European and 3 world records. Despite this, Ben had been unable to secure paid employment. With help from the programme's Enabling Fund Ben received support to gain a lifeguard qualification and with the support of his job coach, secured a work placement. Ben has now found paid employment as a General Leisure Assistant with Newquay Waterworld.

My Story

There I was, just 18 years old and living in Nottingham, working with my mum and sister packing jumpers in a factory. One day my luck changed forever when I spotted an advert in the local newspaper for dancers at Baileys Nightclub. I couldn't wait to call them and was delighted when invited in for an audition!

I had never had any formal dance training but I desperately wanted that job! I couldn't believe it when they told me I could start in two weeks' time along with three other girls. On my first night I was so nervous, especially as Showaddywaddy were performing and the place was packed. I walked onto the stage and all the lights were on me. I started to dance and after about four minutes one of the other dancers changed places with me. I had done it! I had danced on the stage with all those people watching me, how did I manage that?

I stayed dancing for two years at Baileys, then life changed again when I trained to be a croupier in Southampton. I then returned to work in Nottingham at the Victoria Casino. That's when my balance started to go. Doctors sent me to see a neurologist and I had an MRI scan. I was then told I had Multiple Sclerosis (MS) which explained why I had lost my balance and kept falling over.

Shortly afterwards my mother in law became ill so I moved with my husband and daughter down to Cornwall to be with her. We had always had lovely holidays in Cornwall and it held fond memories for us. I then started to do some voluntary work for Disability Cornwall in Hayle and The Merlin Project in St Austell. I also began visiting the gym twice a week, which helps maintain my fitness level.

There is no denying that MS has changed my life, but I have met a lot of wonderful people since being diagnosed and made many new friends. Although my dancing days are over, I still live life to the full.

By Phyllis Chapman



Phyllis, the dancing queen



An-Skyber is a newly converted holiday barn with great accessible facilities catering for disabled people in beautiful Tresmeer, near Launceston, Cornwall.

4 Star rating & mobility level 2

**www.an-skyber-holidays.co.uk
Contact Name: Julie Walters**

Tel: 01566 781339

Email: juliewalters@uwclub.net



Families with disabled children struggling to survive

A report from the charity Contact a Family claims that financial difficulties have become the norm for families with disabled children. Current economic problems have worsened the situation.

One in four parents with disabled children go without heating, 14% go without food and 51% of those questioned

said they had borrowed money from family or friends to buy essentials – an increase of nearly 10% from 2008 figures.

Srabani Sen, the charity's chief executive officer said, "Everyone has been hit hard by the recession, but families with disabled children were already having to cope with a harsh combination of extra living costs and the difficult balance of holding down a job and caring."

Minister for disabled people, Maria Miller, offered reassurances, saying the welfare system for disabled families is being reformed and simplified.

Debenhams breaks new ground with national disabled model campaign

Debenhams has become the first retailer on the British high street to launch a national window campaign featuring a disabled model, in all of its 160 stores in the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

The ground breaking imagery features disabled model, Shannon Murray, along with additional photography, mannequins and products in a display to launch the Debenhams autumn/winter womenswear. The innovative display follows an approach by Nikki Fox and Natasha Wood, both disability campaigners and presenters of the hit TV show, *How to Look Good Naked*, which led to a trial using Shannon in

three stores earlier this year. The pilot resulted in some of the most responsive and positive feedback the retailer has ever received, prompting Debenhams to take new shots and roll out across all its stores.

The move comes as a natural next step for Debenhams following campaigns featuring plus size and petite models, un-airbrushed swim models and size 16 mannequins - all since the start of 2010.

Shannon Murray said: "I'm delighted to be working with Debenhams again and I applaud their dedication to represent real women on the high street. I'm hoping eventually other brands will follow Debenhams' lead and recognise the diversity of their customers."

Nikki Fox praised the store for using Shannon in its campaign: "It was a very proud moment for me when Debenhams agreed to cast our beautiful disabled model Shannon for such a huge campaign, but what is even more exciting is how Debenhams have continued their commitment to using Shannon."

New equality rights for the workplace come into force

The Equality Act covers many workplace areas and draws nine separate pieces of legislation into a single act. Equalities Minister, Theresa May, says it will now be easier for firms to comply with anti-discrimination rules.

The new law restricts the circumstances in which employers can ask job applicants questions about disability or health prior to offering them a position, making it more difficult for disabled people to be unfairly screened out.

"In these challenging economic times it's more important than ever for employers to make the most of all the talent available," said Theresa May.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission point out that, "Everyone is protected by the new law as it covers age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex (meaning gender) and sexual orientation."

Under the act people are not allowed to discriminate, harass or victimise another person because they belong to a group the Act protects, they are thought to belong to one of those groups or are associated with someone who does.'

Chronicles of the Pengelly Belly



Nicola Pengelly at home in her herb garden



The lead up to the festive season is often manic and slightly stressful, full of welcome but often unexpected visits from friends and family dropping in for some Christmas cheer. It's nice to have some simple supper recipes to hand, that can be left bubbling on the stove and ready to serve at a moment's notice, or at least suitable for reheating.

Italian Bean Soup

INGREDIENTS

2 tbsp olive oil
 1 onion, thinly sliced
 2 carrots, peeled and diced
 2 sticks of celery, thinly sliced
 1 red pepper, cored and finely diced
 ¼ green cabbage, finely shredded
 2 cloves of garlic, peeled and finely diced
 1 tin of haricot beans in water
 1 tin of chopped plum tomatoes
 2 tsp fresh thyme
 1 bay leaf (you can use dried herbs, but reduce the quantity to 1 tsp of each)
 2-3 shredded sage leaves
 1 pint of vegetable stock
 Salt and pepper to season
 Green pesto
 Grated parmesan cheese

METHOD

- 1 Heat the olive oil in a large stock pan. Add the onion, reduce the heat and slowly cook until translucent.
- 2 Add the carrot, celery, red pepper, garlic and herbs and cook for a further 8-10 minutes until vegetables start to soften.
- 3 Add the tinned tomatoes, beans (including their water), vegetable stock and bay leaf. Season with salt and pepper. Cover loosely and simmer for 1 hour.
- 4 Add the shredded cabbage and simmer for a further 10 minutes.
- 5 To serve, ladle the soup into big bowls; add a tsp of pesto, some grated parmesan cheese and a hunk of bread on the side.

To make this soup into a more substantial meal, when you add the cabbage, add a handful of pasta shapes and cook for a further 5 minutes or until the pasta is cooked.

Winter Root Vegetable Stew with herby dumplings

INGREDIENTS FOR THE STEW

1 tbsp olive oil
 1 knob of butter
 2 large leeks
 2 floury potatoes
 2 carrots peeled
 2 parsnips
 ½ turnip
 4oz pearl barley
 1½ pints vegetable stock
 Salt and pepper

FOR THE DUMPLINGS

2oz vegetable suet
 4oz self-raising flour
 150ml of cold water
 1tsp dried mixed herbs
 1tsp mustard powder
 Salt and pepper to season

METHOD

- 1 Heat the butter and olive oil in a large saucepan / stock pot.
- 2 Chop the leeks into ½ inch slices and add to the pan, cooking on a low heat until softened.
- 3 Peel and chop the remaining vegetables into ½ inch cubes and add to the pan. Cook, covered, on a medium heat for 10 minutes.
- 4 Add the vegetable stock, pearl barley and season to taste. Stir.
- 5 Bring to the boil and then reduce to a gentle simmer for 1 ¼ hours, ensuring the pan is partially covered.
- 6 Meanwhile, make the dumplings. Mix all the ingredients together in a bowl, using the water to bind, until it comes together in a fairly stiff dough. Form into six small dumplings.
- 7 Drop the dumplings into the stew and cook for a further 10 minutes covered and a final 10 minutes uncovered.
- 8 Ladle into bowls and serve with grated cheese on top, or for an extra special treat with rashers of crispy bacon.



Restaurant Review



DISCOVER food



If you go out in the woods today you're sure of a big surprise



Woods Café must be one of the most picturesque in Cornwall, set amid the thickly forested slopes of Cardinham Woods, owned by the Forestry Commission and situated only two miles from Bodmin. On top of that you really get the feeling this is one service provider who truly is trying to provide services that everyone can access and we even spotted some copies of DISCOVER on the coffee table, it's got to be a top spot!

The charming centuries-old woodsman's cottage has a lovely open fire and a welcoming atmosphere. You can enjoy homemade stews, soups, salads and sandwiches, depending on the season, or just a freshly baked cake or a cream tea if you fancy it. It has a fully accessible toilet with plenty of room inside as well as baby changing facilities, special facilities for dogs, horses, and cycles, and plenty of seating outdoors for enjoying the woodland experience, whatever the time of year.

The café is very accessible, situated next to the car park, with open space in front and outside tables from which to eat and a great children's play area with climbing frames made from forestry wood.

Lara and David Spurrell have lived here since November 2009, along with their young Springer Spaniel, Dylan, and older cat called Bailey. David is a paramedic based at Newquay but he was there ready to take Dylan for a walk when we arrived for lunch. Lara runs Woods Café with help from her sister-in-law, mum and dad – making it a real family business, which gives it a very obvious homely touch. There are two dining rooms, both with tables, chairs and sofas so you can sit at a table or relax on the sofas. This must be great in winter beside the open log fire, but the day we visited was a beautiful sunny autumn day with no need for the extra warmth.

Prior to owning Woods Café, Lara worked in restaurants

and pubs developing a passion for good basic wholesome food. All the dishes offered at Woods Café are homemade by Lara and her family using produce sourced locally.

David said, "We have never owned our own café before, but it's going much better than we had expected." Open every day of the year except Christmas day, the café serves between 30 to 90 meals a day depending upon the time of year, plus many extra cakes and drinks.

The menu changes each season and we enjoyed the last week of the summer menu, with a good selection of sandwiches, hot specials, cream teas (including homemade scones), fabulous cakes and a variety of beverages.

We both chose the sausage casserole, cooked with tomatoes, peppers and potatoes and was extremely tasty. I followed it with a banana, chocolate and walnut muffin and Ann had coffee sponge. To round off, we both had Fairtrade Origin coffee with the coffee beans actually roasted in Falmouth. It was a great lunch, with the added bonus that we were so full I didn't have to cook an evening meal when we got home!

In winter, the hot stews are very popular and feature beef, chicken and venison from farms in and around the woods.

Lara told us: "I love cooking and want our customers to be able to fully relax and enjoy our home made food." Well, our experience was just that – a wonderful lunch in a lovely café – and we will definitely be going back for more.

For more information visit www.forestry.gov.uk and search for Cardinham Woods Café.

By Ann & George Le Hunte

Get yer rocks off

DISCOVER's talking sex!

Sex and disability are rarely discussed in the same sentence. Being disabled doesn't mean you can't have a good sex life, but you may need to plan ahead as there are probably going to be many practical issues to consider in order to make things as enjoyable as possible. More than 50% of disabled people do not have any form of a regular sex life.

Today's and past societies tend to view disabled people as asexual. Our culture has tended to set various rules and ideas on how people should look and act. A person with a disability of some kind may tend to feel unattractive, or even less worthy of a sexual partnership or relations, because they think they can't live up to the idealised image and expectations today's society has set. If the disability happened later on in their life, the person may recall how they used to look, and feel very unattractive by comparison to who they once were.

Due to the general ignorance, lack of knowledge, prejudices and lack of sexual education, the disabled person's chances of meeting a potential sexual partner can be greatly reduced. However, if sex and disabilities were discussed more openly in our society today, then

people would be much more educated and perhaps accepting about the topic.

Sexual ignorance is an enormous hurdle for most of us when we are trying to figure ourselves out sexually regardless of ability. Our situations are perhaps made a lot worse when we are denied access to the little bit of sex education most able bodied people receive. In a great deal of cases, sex education is being withheld from many disabled people on the assumption that the individual 'won't need it.'

However, turning this prejudicial understanding around, having a disability can actually become a positive advantage when it comes to sex. It means you need to learn how to communicate and be up-front about what works for you and what doesn't. Having to change and adapt the standard 'script' means you have to be flexible and creative. You have to focus on what actually feels best for you and your partner, instead of getting hung-up about what's 'normal' or how you're 'supposed' to have sex.

Whilst a disability, whatever it is, may contribute to the notion that a quickie, romp or swing from chandeliers might be out of the question, with a little careful thought and planning, almost anything is possible!

Disabled World

Published: October 2010

www.scarleteen.com/article/politics/no_big_deal_sex_disability





Sexual Health & Disability Alliance (SHADA)

Since 1999, an organisation called Outsiders has run the freephone Sex and Disability Helpline. This service was run very much in isolation by Dr Tuppy Owens, who decided to set up the 'Sexual Health & Disability Alliance' to bring together disability helpline operators and others around the country, who offer advice on sex, sexuality, relationships and disability.

SHADA started as a small group of individuals, eager to improve the sex-positive work we do, provide more informed services, and attract helpline operators from other disability agencies. We hoped to eventually influence policies so more disabled people can explore their sexuality and enjoy relationships.

Meetings have been held twice a year in London. We decided that joining this group is not dependent on being able to attend meetings, but the more of us who can sit around a table together, the better. The outcomes of each meeting have been sent to members by email, and put on the Outsiders website.

We welcomed anyone engaged in the positive promotion of sex for disabled people. Slowly, we gained a wider range of members. Added to the helpline managers, came the managers of homes and colleges for disabled people, pioneers in the medical profession, and health and social care professionals, all of whom felt they were struggling on their own to provide sexual advice and support to disabled people.

In 2008 we formulated our aims, vision and mission statement. We also set our minds to improving the training and support given to staff to enable them to ensure disabled clients were supported in their personal struggle, if they so wished.

SHADA's vision is for a more inclusive society where every disabled person's unique sexual identity is given due respectful, non-judgemental recognition and acceptance, enabling its diverse expression and celebration.

Sex and Disability Helpline 11am-7pm weekdays
T: 0707 4993527

To join SHADA
E: katiwiltshier@talktalk.net

Dating & chat sites

Match Affinity looks at what makes people individual: i.e. their values, the way they live and the way they interact with others which helps them make their matches.

www.matchaffinity.com

eHarmony is unlike other online dating sites, as you don't need to sell yourself or search through endless profiles – they do the work for you. Only eHarmony matches you with singles based on key dimensions of compatibility proven to be the foundation for a long-term relationship, like character, intellect and values.

www.eharmony.co.uk

Disabilitydating is a free dating site aimed at playing cupid for disabled people who are seeking fun, friendship, love, romance and dating online. They aim to enable matchmaking in a safe, fun, online dating environment.

www.disabilitydating.com

Enable Already is a dating website for disabled people, catering for people who are mobility, visually, hearing or speech impaired or have learning difficulties or chronic conditions. The website also includes dating by location, but currently only as far South West as Plymouth.

www.enablealready.com

BENT is the only comprehensive webzine devoted to the lives of disabled gay men.

www.bentvoices.org

The Site.org has a tab devoted to sex and relationships. Within this section is some good information about having sex as a disabled person, sexual confidence, dating and disabilities and the practicalities of dating for disabled people.

www.thesite.org/sexandrelationships/havingsex/sexanddisability

SPOKZ website sells toys and sex aids for disabled people.

www.spokz.co.uk

Sex advice for young people

www.spiderbytes.ca is a website with a whole host of information regarding sexual health to support young people with disabilities in making healthy and informed decisions about their sexuality.

Sex (which has come to mean sexual intercourse) and sexuality (which embraces the whole self) are very often merged in people's minds. From this comes the myth that if you don't or can't have sexual intercourse, you are not a sexual person. In reality, people who don't regularly have intercourse can be very sexual and sexy.

Sexuality encompasses more than the physical act of having sexual intercourse, it includes the emotional, intellectual and sensual components as well. Or as Anna Freud put it...Sex is what you do, sexuality is who you are.

This website hosts frequently asked questions young disabled people often ask. Perhaps these are questions you have thought about but didn't know where to find

the answer. Or, if you cannot find the answer you can email your question.

There are human rights and legal rights but are there such things as sexual rights?

There are several principles that disabled people, reproductive health organisations and legal professionals all agree upon. Knowing these rights can help you to safely discover your own sexuality.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT...

- To expect to be treated fairly, respectfully and with dignity, regardless of age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, citizenship, education, physical and/or mental abilities.
- To get fair, safe and non-judgmental information, education and counselling for your sexual and reproductive health needs.
- To learn about sex, sexual activities, contraceptives, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs.)
- To have loving, non-sexual, non-abusive relationships with friends, parents, and other people you know.
- To decide who can touch your body, when, where, and for how long. You have the right to object to anyone touching your body and you have the right to say 'no.'
- To make your own decisions and be supported in your decisions with regard to your sexual health and reproductive choices.
- To protect yourself and be protected from unplanned pregnancies, STIs, HIV/Aids and all forms of abuse.
- To privacy and personal space to explore your sexuality.
- To choose a life-style, including a sexual life-style that is comfortable for you.
- To get information that is easy to understand and is disability neutral, when making decisions related to pregnancy.
- To decide if you want to be a parent and when.
- To accept or refuse any service or treatment, including those related to special prenatal tests if you are pregnant. To make a decision, without being forced by others, to accept or terminate your pregnancy.

eefo

For young people and the issues they face...

13-19 years old?
Need help or advice?

www.eefo.net

Check out the EEFO website for a list of young person friendly services and a range of articles on issues young people face during everyday life...

www.eefo.net

Please note that this is not a comprehensive list of all the organisations in Cornwall. If you would like to be included or require any further information please contact DIAL.

ADVICE AND SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

Action for Blind People	01392 332818
Adaction	01872 263001
Age Concern	01872 266388
Alcoholics Anonymous (24 hours)	0845 7697555
Arthritis Care	0808 8004050
Asbah	01726 861062
Benefits Enquiry Line	0800 882200
British Polio Fellowship	0800 0180586
British Red Cross	01872 272878
Citizens Advice Bureaux Cornwall	0844 4994188
Charcot Marie Tooth Disease	01566 86818
Consumer Direct	0845 4040506
Cornwall Advocacy Service	01872 242478
Cornwall Sight Centre	01872 261110
Cornwall Deaf Association Tel/Fax	01872 225868
Text	01872 263664
Cornwall Disabled Association	01872 273518
Cornwall Dyslexia Association Helpline	01872 274827
Cornwall Macmillan Service	01872 354383
Cornwall People First	01736 334857
Cornwall Race Equality Council	07515 580002
Cornwall Rural Community Council	01872 273952
CRUSE Bereavement Care Helpline	01726 76100
DIAL Cornwall	01736 759500
Direct Payments Scheme	01872 324357
Disability Cornwall	01736 756655
Eating Disorder Association	01872 884432
Enable (training advice)	01208 77711
Epilepsy Association Helpline	0808 8005050
Gamblers Anonymous	0207 3843040
HEADWAY (for head-injured people)	01208 873567
Healthy Gay Cornwall	01872 262929
Huntington's Disease Association	01822 835974
ICAS (Independent Complaints Advocacy Service)	01579 345193
Learning Disability Helpline	0808 8081111
MESH (ME Support & Help)	01209 217271
Mid-Cornwall Lifestyles	01208 79911
Motor Neurone Disease Association	0560 1984243
Multiple Sclerosis Society	0808 8008000
National Autistic Society (West Cornwall Local Support Branch)	07917 559600
National Osteoporosis Society Cornwall Helpline	01872 561787
Parkinsons Disease Society Helpline	0808 8000303
Relate – Relationship Counselling	01726 74128
Sexual Health Service	01872 358750
Shelter	08445 152300
SSAFA Forces Help	01872 863078
St John Ambulance	01726 815967
St Petros Society	01872 264153
Stroke Association	01392 447362
YMCA	01736 365016
YWCA – Truro Young Women's Centre	01872 263112

CARERS

Carers Line (Wed & Thu 10am – 12 noon)	0808 8087777
Carers Rights (for older carers of people with a learning disability)	01872 264057
Carer Support Service	01872 243531
Carers UK	0207 4908818
Mental Health Carer	
Support Workers Project	01209 613456
Parent Carer Council for Cornwall	01736 756037
Young Carers Project	01209 614956

COUNCIL

Cornwall Council	0300 1234100
SOCIAL CARE - Directorates of Adult Care & Support and Children, Schools & Families	0300 1234131
Out of Hours (between 5pm – 7.45am)	01208 251300

CRISIS SUPPORT

Cornwall Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre	01872 262100
Domestic Violence 24hr Helpline	01872 225629
Samaritans Cornwall	01872 277277
Victim Support	0845 0567999
West Cornwall Women's Aid	01736 367539
Women's Domestic Violence Network	01208 79992

HEALTH

Community Health Services	
Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)	01326 435885
Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Primary Care Trust (CIOSPCT)	0845 1708000
CIOSPCT PALS	0845 1708000
Cornwall Partnership NHS Trust (CFT)	01726 291000
CFT PALS/ Customer Support	01726 291109
CFT PALS out of hours	01208 251300
Dental Care Emergency Service	01872 354375
Derriford Hospital	0845 1558155
Derriford PALS	01752 211818
Disablement Services Centre	0845 1558071
GP Out of Hours	0845 2000227
Health Promotion Service	01209 313419
Marie Therese House (MTH)	01736 758875
NHS Direct	0845 4647
Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust (Treliske)	01872 250000
RCHT PALS	01872 252793

MENTAL HEALTH

Bufferzone	07929 867264
Cornwall Mental Health Project	01872 243532
Dementia H	
Kernow Mind Partnership	
Carrick	01872 222469
Newquay	01637 871063
Plymouth & district	01752 254004

DISCOVER *directory*

West Cornwall 01209 714550
 Nightlink (between 5pm-midnight) 0808 8000306
 Rethink 01208 815676
 Rural Community Link Project 01726 821858

MOBILITY EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS

Cornwall Mobility Centre 01872 254920
 HSC Mobility 01736 755927
 Launceston Mobility 01566 774030
 Pro Mobility 01326 569494
 Tremorvah Industries 01872 324340

PARENTS YOUNG PEOPLE & CHILDREN

Barnardos (Social Inclusion Project)
 East 01566 86873
 West 01736 361868
 Childline 0800 1111
 Connexions (free from landlines only) 0800 9755111
 Contact A Family 0808 8083555
 Cornwall SHARE (information /advice /counseling 13 -25yrs) 0800 181033
 Disabled Parents Network 0300 3300639
 Face2Face 0844 8009250
 NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0808 8005000

Parent Partnership Service 01736 752826
 Special Parenting Service 01872 358713
 Young People Cornwall & Hear Our Voice 01872 261989

TAXIS (with good accessibility provision)

A2B 0800 1695473
 Ansom Cabs 01208 72207
 Bodmin Taxi Service 01208 73000
 Caradon Cabs 01579 340007
 Hayle Taxis 01736 753000
 L & R Cars 01736 800414
 Richard Wilson Transport 01726 883460
 Summercourt Travel 01726 861108
 Travel 4,000 01209 719961

VOLUNTEERS & VOLUNTEER TRANSPORT

Age Concern Volunteer Transport (TAP) 01872 223388
 Volunteer Cornwall Head Office 01872 265305
 Transport 01872 265300
 Cornwall Community Volunteer Services 01209 718844
 East Cornwall Council for Voluntary Services 01208 832763
 Women's Royal Voluntary Service 0845 6014670

Ways you can support Disability Cornwall



Use 'everyclick' as your search engine and nominate Disability Cornwall as your chosen charity, with every click you will be making a donation!



Use recycle4charity to dispose of your old ink cartridges and mobile phones and nominate Disability Cornwall. Alternatively you can send them to us and we will recycle them for you!



Register with easyfundraising and choose us as your cause to support. When you shop online through this site you can choose from over 2000 retailers, including popular names such as Amazon, M&S and Argos. Up to 15% of every purchase will then be donated to Disability Cornwall! It doesn't cost you a penny extra to shop but it raises funds for us. Many retailers now give extra discounts when you buy through this site, so you can even save money!



Please use our services! You can hire our conference suite or use our payroll and access auditing services.

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Although the DISCOVER team do their utmost to ensure every service published within the magazine is fully compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, readers should be aware we cannot vouch for the full accessibility of each and every one.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Sudoku answers

2	9	8	6	5	1	7	3	4
7	3	6	9	4	2	8	5	1
4	1	5	3	8	7	2	6	9
6	4	9	8	7	3	1	2	5
5	8	3	2	1	9	6	4	7
1	2	7	5	4	6	9	8	3
3	5	1	7	2	8	4	9	6
9	6	2	1	3	4	5	7	8
8	7	4	9	6	5	3	1	2

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www.cornishpixels.co.uk

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 T: 01736 364694
www.headlandprinters.co.uk

Join Disability Cornwall for free and DISCOVER more!

The easiest way to ensure you receive free copies of DISCOVER delivered to your door is to become a member of Disability Cornwall. This is just one of the benefits of membership which is free for individuals living within the county.

For organisations the cost is £25 with an annual renewal of £17.50. Tick here for associate membership (please complete correspondence details only and enclose a cheque or make a BACS payment).

Name:

Organisation:

Address:

.....

Post code:

Tel No:

Email:

giftaid it

If you are a UK tax payer your gift is eligible for Gift Aid which is worth an extra 28p for every pound!

I am a UK tax payer and I would like Disability Cornwall to claim Gift Aid on my donations unless I notify you otherwise. I confirm that I pay income or capital gains tax at least equal to the amount claimed as Gift Aid in the tax year.

Signed

Date

As a user led organisation 51% of our membership must have a disability, therefore we must ask if you have a disability. Yes No

Learning the needs of members helps us ensure we cover relevant information in DISCOVER therefore please state what type of disability you have? Tick any that apply

Learning Mental health Physical
 Sensory Other

We are recruiting disabled people who are available via email to give us feedback on issues of concern, called the DC100. Obtaining your views helps us ensure we act in a truly representative way. Would you be interested in joining the DC100? Yes

Occasionally other organisations offer to support us by mailing DISCOVER to some of our members which significantly reduces cost to the charity. Therefore we may give them an envelope with your address on it. If you do not wish us to do this tick here

I would like to make a donation to support your charity and your work.

I enclose a cheque made payable to Disability Cornwall for £ _____

I would like to setup a regular donation by standing order:

£10 £20 other £ _____

monthly annually

Follows are the bank details which you will need if you wish to set up a standing order. Please use your name as the reference.

CAF Bank (Charities Aid Foundation)

Account Name: Disability Cornwall

Account No: 00082346

Sort code: 40-52-40

The Warehouse

Conference Suite

- Brand new contemporary and accessible conference facility
- Just off the A30
- Ample free parking
- Wi Fi, hearing induction loop, PA system, projector & flip chart
- Guests help themselves to tea, coffee & chilled water
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- Buffet lunch can be arranged
- Local amenities include Marks & Spencers, Boots, Costa Coffee, Premier Inn and Brewers Fayre



DisAbility
CORNWALL
& Isles of Scilly
EMPOWER • ASSIST • FACILITATE

Units 1G/H Guildford Road Ind Estate
Hayle
Cornwall
TR27 4QZ

T: 01736 756655
E: info@disabilitycornwall.org.uk
www.disabilitycornwall.org.uk

All inclusive rates
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