



Fife Independent Disability Network Newsletter

June
Edition
2007

Mr James Page vs. Bus Companies

The issue of whether or not I can get on a bus in my 3-wheeled electric scooter has not gone away. The Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000 gives a maximum size of 1200 x 700 for wheeled mobility aids, and my scooter measures 1170 x 635, so it is within the legal limit. In March Stagecoach in Fife did a “risk assessment “ on one of their buses with only the bare minimum of space for a disabled user, and I got into that space, and was judged able to use any vehicle which has a compliance certificate. But I am still being refused access to buses. The problem is the attitude of some drivers, the wording of the legislation and its interpretation.

The Dept of Transport in London thinks that “... scooters are generally intended for use as an alternative to public transport for short trips. As such they are often large, less manoeuvrable than a wheelchair, difficult to restrain in some vehicles, and generally unsuitable for occupied transportation.” Whoever wrote that doesn't know much about scooters, and even less about disability. There are scooters that are smaller than mine.



Many bus companies have a policy of refusing all scooters. I am fed up trying to get through to them that my scooter, and many others, are within the legal limit, and should be allowed on buses. Sometimes the management of a bus company says all the right things but the drivers refuse to let me on. Sometimes the management say that scooters are not allowed on their buses, but I take the chance that the driver won't refuse me and get on.

And, of course, there's only room for one disabled person on a bus. Ideally, there would be a percentage of space that is equal to the percentage of disabled people in the area. In Scotland this is going to be at least 10%. It doesn't need to be a huge space without seats, it could have return-to-upright seats

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

which can be used by able-bodied passengers when there are no disabled people on board. And automatic ramps would make drivers less grumpy.

James Page
FIDN Transportation Spokesperson

Is anyone having problems with transport ie: local services/ hospitals/ ambulances in the North East Fife Area. If so please contact Muriel at the office. Tel: 01592 203993

Mail on Sunday Mobility Scooter Articles

You may or may not be aware of two articles that have recently been published in the Mail on Sunday, which call into question the use and regulation of mobility scooters in the UK. Scoota Mart have received a letter from the National Federation of Shopmobility which should clear up any confusion that these articles may have caused.

Current owners of 8mph scooters who do not display a tax disc on their machine, or do not have their machine registered with the DVLA, should call the telephone number at the bottom of this page to find out what you need to do. The letter follows:

Hello All,

NFSUK has received hundreds of phone calls and emails from concerned members of the public about the two articles that have appeared in the Mail on Sunday on 26th November and 3rd December 2006. The reports highlight some concerns, but are not balanced or in context. To suggest that every scooter owner or user behaves in the way the articles suggest or that they are all acting illegally in not registering their vehicles with the DVLA is factually incorrect.

All affiliated Schemes know that NFSUK requires that as a condition for affiliation the Schemes must adhere to minimum standard and best practice requirements in regard of user training, maintenance of equipment, risk assessment and insurance. These standards have to be confirmed / re-confirmed on an annual basis.

Many Schemes have been amongst those calling for the facts about registration. The information provided direct from the DVLA Policy Unit about the legislative provisions for registering and licensing these "invalid vehicles" is as follows:

"The Use of Invalid Carriages on the Highways Regulations 1988 (made under the provisions of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970) provides the construction and use requirements for invalid carriages. Under these regulations, invalid carriages are separated into 3 categories:

Class 1 - Manual wheelchairs, i.e. self-propelled or attendant

Inside This Issue:

Energy Champions	5
New Booklet for Patients Unhappy with their Doctor	7
HelpLive - DRC launches new online service	9
Sky TV has never been so user-friendly	13
Government passes New Welfare Act 2007	15
National Key Scheme (RADAR)	18

Continued on page 4

YOUR CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

Hello everyone I hope you enjoy the summer addition of FIDN's newsletter.

It is that time of year again the AGM will be held 12th September 2007 at the Kingswood Hotel, Burntisland starting at 1.00pm. There will also so be an election for part of the Management Committee in August if you wish to apply please contact Muriel at the office for an application form

In to-days world you have to be more professional if you are to survive and to be able to access funding you have to meet stricter criteria. With this in mind FIDN is employing 2 consultants in 2007 – 08 the first will look at Governance with regard to FIDN's Policies and Procedures to ensure that we are complying with all the regulations from OSCR regarding charity law, the new employment law and also the new legislation regarding vulnerable adults. The second consultation will facilitate the work-plan day and then take forward the outcomes from the day. They will be looking at a range of options of how FIDN can take forward the work, including such items as access funding, smarter working, how we can work more closely with other organisations.

In order for the Newsletter to remain topical we need input from the members so if you have any articles or pictures could you please send them into the office. In order to encourage young people to take a more active part in FIDN's work we are looking for individuals a group or groups of young disabled people who would be interested in putting their views, experiences into articles for the quarterly newsletter.

If you are not aware we have our own website now, www.fidn.co.uk is packed with information. The information includes photos and videos of the network meetings, all of our publications and links to other organisations, it also includes a link to a dating organisation which appears to be very popular. We are also continuing with the digital Fife website www.fidn.org.uk



Michael Tonks
Chairperson

Fife Independent Disability Networks next Network Meeting will be held in The Parkway Hotel , Abbotshall Road, Kirkcaldy. on Wednesday 25th of July 2007 from 2 - 4pm

Guest Speakers:

- **Ian Bease, Superintendent, Fife Police**
- **Merrick Yates, Sales Manager, Canmore Healthcare Ltd**

For more information contact Muriel at the Office (see page 16)

Direct Payments Rate Freeze

In January 2007 the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham announced a freeze in the increase of direct payment rates for disabled and older people for 2007/ 2008.

Two local direct payment recipients, subsequently instructed solicitors Leigh Day & Co to challenge the decision which they believed to be unlawful.

The legal issues highlighted that a freeze in the hourly rate of payment would amount to a cut in service. It was argued this would be unlawful without a re-assessment of an individual's needs under community care legislation and could have implications under the Human Rights Act.

The claim further asserted that the Council was also failing to consider disability equality and was therefore in breach of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. It was argued that a freeze on direct payment rates would clearly have a significant effect on local disabled people and their ability to administer their own care packages.

Rudi Breakwell – Bos local direct payment recipient said "This decision appears to have been taken without any consideration of the needs of disabled people. We were not involved or consulted at all during the decision making process."

The Council has now had to overturn its original decision and will award a 2% inflationary increase to direct payment rates in line with the Council's own annual budget increase for other social services provision.

Sue Bott, Director of the National Centre for Independent Living said "I am pleased that local people in Hammersmith and Fulham have been prepared to challenge their local authority's decision with a successful result. I salute their efforts which show that disabled people can make a difference when we put our minds to it. It is no use just sitting at home and complaining. If we do not like decisions made about us we have to take action to challenge those decisions".

National Centre for Independent Living: June 2007 Newsletter

Continued from page 2

propelled, not electrically propelled.

Class 2 - Powered wheelchairs and scooters - intended for footway use only with a maximum speed of 4mph and an unladen weight not exceeding 113.4kgs

Class 3 - Mechanically propelled invalid carriages that are constructed or adapted to be capable of exceeding a speed of 4mph but incapable of exceeding a speed of 8mph on the level under its own power (generally powered wheelchairs and other outdoor vehicles including scooters intended for use on roads/highways). They must be fitted with a device capable of limiting the maximum speed to 4mph for used when travelling on footways. The unladen weight must not exceed 150kgs.

Continued on page 8

Energy Champions

In October 2006, Exxonmobil and Community Service Volunteers (CSV) launched the 'Energy Efficiency Challenge', an initiative designed to help achieve affordable warmth and energy efficient homes for the elderly, sick, isolated or vulnerable people in our communities.

The project is built around volunteers, trained to become 'Energy Champions', who in turn will work with local volunteers to communicate information about this FREE and innovative service, a service that goes in to homes and offers free advice on all matters relating to power consumption and in particular heating the home and staying warm. Energy Champions will give talks to local groups and organisations and take referrals from the local Energy Volunteers.

On a typical visit, which is by invitation or arrangement only, the Energy Champion would identify themselves to the householder, and have a general conversation about the householder's fuel bills to gauge if they are too high or have been wrongly calculated. They would examine hot water and central heating programme timers, check thermostat settings, bleed radiators and test Thermostatic radiator valves. Energy Champions would also check loft and cavity wall insulation, and, with set criteria of questions to determine if the householder has any entitlement to a grant to aid keeping the home warm.

Champions will also issue energy saving bulbs, thermometers and information packs on staying warm, and where necessary refer the householder to the most appropriate agency for assistance. Energy Champions will also help with form filling and telephone calls.

Energy Champions and Energy Volunteers would be asked to give six to eight hours of their time each week, giving of advice to the community. Incurred expenses for travel etc will be reimbursed. All volunteers will be covered by public liability insurance and assistance from

the Development Officer, Energy Action Scotland and the local Energy Advice Centre is always available.

'In Fife, the ExxonMobil Energy Challenge sets out, through advice and practical help, to reach those people who are missing out on help to become more energy efficient. The Energy Challenge works with local and national agencies to help people heat and insulate their homes, save money on fuel and improve their quality of life.'

If you would like to help us help others then contact CSV and ask for Sandy Wilkie, Energy Efficiency Development Officer on 0131 622 7766 or by email, swilkie@csv.org.uk or fill in the attached slip at the bottom of page 6 and send it to:



**Energy Efficiency
CSV-RSVP
Wellgate House
200 Cowgate
Edinburgh
EH1 1NQ.**

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

Thousands Up for Grabs

Thousands Up for Grabs

The Yorkshire Building Society Charitable Foundation is inviting people to nominate good causes for its annual charity give away.

'Make a Difference Week' will run from Friday 15th June during which existing customers and members of the public are invited to call into any of the society's branches to recommend a charity to receive a £50 grant.

Loise Neill of the Foundation said: "Make a Difference Week offers the Society the chance to support smaller, local charities that are often overlooked by large organisations but are important to the communities where our staff and members live and work."

To find your nearest Yorkshire Building Society branch or agency, please visit the Society's website www.ybs.co.uk

Elaine Wilson

Access Development Administrator

Scottish Disability Equality Forum

12 Enterprise House

Springkerse Business Park

Stirling FK7 7UF

Tel: 01786 473152

Fax: 01786 450902

Dunfermline Branch (this is the only Branch in Fife)

68-70 High Street

Dunfermline

Fife

KY12 7AT

Fax: 01383 621884

Opening Times:

9.00 - 17.00 : Mon Tues Thur Fri

9.30 - 17.00 : Wed

9.00 - 13.00 : Sat

The below form is the attached slip from page 5

**I am interested in learning more about the Energy Efficiency Challenge.
Please contact me as indicated**

Phone **Email** **Send Information**

Name	
Address	
Town	
Postcode	
Tel No.	
Email	

New Booklet for Patients Unhappy with their Doctor

A new booklet for patients in Scotland has been published by the General Medical Council, explaining what to do if they are unhappy with their doctor's medical practice.

The General Medical Council has produced the information as part of an ongoing campaign to improve patients' access to information about its procedures. The leaflet will be sent to all NHS complaints officers in Scotland to assist them in visiting patients who have concerns about individual doctors.

Most complaints about the NHS are dealt with through the NHS Complaints procedure, and information about this is provided by Health Rights Information Scotland for use throughout the NHS. The General Medical Council booklet is designed to sit alongside this information, and offers patients advice about what to do if they think their doctor is not fit to practise or may be a risk to patients. It includes a number to call if patients want to discuss their concern or are not sure whether to report a doctor.

The booklet also includes information for patients about other organisation in Scotland, including the Independent Advice and Support Service and the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman that can offer advice and support in relation to their complaint.

Copies of the booklet can be obtained from the General Medical Council, 5th floor, The Tun, 4 Jackson's Entry, Holyrood Road, Edinburgh EH8 8PJ (Telephone 0131 525 8700).

Note from Editor. You can also download a copy of the booklet at: <http://www.spsa.org.uk/news/article.php?id=166>

Shopping centre's accessible toilet farce

Disabled people who want to use the accessible toilet on the first floor of a Fife shopping centre are forced to use an escalator or make a half-mile detour. And when they want to return to the ground floor, they either have to use a flight of stairs or leave the building again to make the same detour in reverse.

Christine Munro, from Midlothian, who has arthritis, was able to reach the toilet at the Kingsgate Shopping Centre in Dunfermline via the escalator. But to return to the ground floor she was forced to use the stairs.

Mrs Munro, who visited the shopping centre in April, said "If I'd been there on my own, I wouldn't have been able to access it."

"Two people who'd seen it happen regularly (disabled people forced to make a difficult detour to reach the toilet) said it was a disgrace."

A shopping centre spokesman said an extension, which would include a lift for disabled visitors, was due to open by August 2008.

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

HelpLive - DRC launches new online service

This month sees the launch of our new, innovative HelpLive service, which will make contacting the DRC Helpline easier for people who find the telephone difficult or impossible to use.

HelpLive is like a telephone call but the conversation is carried out by text rather than speech. Appointments can be booked on the DRC website and at the appointed time you simply log onto the website where an adviser will be waiting to help with your query. This new service will be useful to people with hearing impairments or learning disabilities, but anybody whose disability means it is difficult or impossible for them to use the telephone is welcome to use HelpLive.

If you use HelpLive, your feedback will help us to make improvements. Please make comments in the feedback form we provide after your appointment.

Helpline enquiry

ask DRC for quick answers to your questions

General enquiry about the DDA http://www.drc.org.uk/about_us/helpline/helpline_enquiry/general_enquiry_about_the_dda.aspx

General enquiry about the DDA (Easy Read Version) http://www.drc.org.uk/about_us/helpline/helpline_enquiry/general_enquiry_about_the_dda/easy_read_version.aspx

Enquiry form if you think that you have been discriminated against http://www.drc.org.uk/about_us/helpline/helpline_enquiry/enquiry_form.aspx

Enquiry form if you think that you have been discriminated against (Easy Read Version) http://www.drc.org.uk/about_us/helpline/helpline_enquiry/enquiry_form/easy_read_version.aspx


Videophone booking form http://www.drc.org.uk/about_us/helpline/helpline_enquiry/videophone_booking_form.aspx

Videophone booking form (Easy Read Version) http://www.drc.org.uk/about_us/helpline/helpline_enquiry/videophone_booking_form/easy_read_version.aspx

The DRC helpline will be unable to answer your enquiry if you have not used one of these mailforms - this is because we need to gather as much information as possible to enable us to assist you.

Welcome to HelpLive, the DRC Helpline's secure, online, one-to-one advice service.

You are speaking with:



Gary Shapland

Conversation window

Gary says: Hello Alison, how can I help you?

Alison2 says: Hello Gary, I have multiple sclerosis and have been absent from work on and off. Currently, I have been off sick for six weeks.

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

Here you can request an appointment and have a live discussion with one of our Helpline advisers. .

HelpLive is currently intended for use only by enquirers who find using the telephone difficult or impossible because of their disability.

<https://www.drc.org.uk/helplive/>

DRC Helpline:

Telephone: 08457 622 633

Textphone: 08457 622 644

You can also contact the Helpline in these ways:

Telephone: 08457 622 633

Textphone: 08457 622 644

(You can speak to an operator at any time between 8am and 8pm, Monday to Friday)

Fax: 08457 778 878

Post: DRC Helpline

FREEPOST MID02164

Stratford upon Avon

CV37 9BR

You can also contact the DRC by using HelpLive: <https://www.drc.org.uk/helplive/> the DRC Helpline's secure, online one-to-one advice service. This is currently intended for use only by enquirers who find using the telephone difficult or impossible because of their disability.

Important note for employers and service providers:

The DRC helpline can provide information to employers and service providers regarding the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) legislation and can advise on very general DDA issues. The DRC CANNOT advise employers or service providers on specific DDA issues relating to a particular incident that has occurred in their workplace.

Ofcom proposes more sign language shows

The broadcasting industry's regulator, Ofcom, has published a consultation document which could lead to more television programmes in sign language.

disabilitynow

The proposals follow research suggesting that few people make use of programmes where signers appear superimposed in the corner of the screen.

Ofcom said that feedback from disability groups suggests that few, if any, British Sign Language (BSL) users watch such shows on low-audience satellite and cable channels.

Ofcom wants to exclude channels with small audiences from having to meet targets for sign-interpreted programming.

Instead, these smaller channels would have to broadcast programmes presented in BSL at least monthly between 7am and 11pm or enter a voluntary scheme for funding a "sign zone" on the Community Channel.

Chair of the British Deaf Association, Francis Murphy, said: "BDA has always supported a vision of a signing channel that broadcasts a variety of quality BSL programmes at

reasonable viewing times for BSL audiences of all ages and backgrounds.”

Meanwhile, a BBC spokesman confirmed that See Hear, the magazine for BSL-users, will be moving to a mid-week, 30-minute slot on BBC2. He said the decision to shorten the programme from 45 minutes at Saturday lunchtime – which has been criticised by some deaf people – was made by its editor, and added: “The audience for See Hear has declined because it inherits a children’s audience rather than an adult one. The decision was taken to put it at a time where more deaf and non-deaf viewers are watching.”

* To view the consultation document and to respond, visit www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/signing/

This article was taken from the Disability Now Website June 2007

www.disabilitynow.org.uk

Continued from page 8

the Department exempts them from the vehicle licensing and registration provisions on an extra-statutory basis.

Class 3 vehicles, however, must display a nil duty tax disc (i.e. be licensed in the disabled tax class) and be registered for road use.

The Road Vehicles (Display of Registration Marks) Regulations 2001 provides the requirements for displaying registration plates. Vehicles that meet the definition of an invalid vehicle within these regulations are exempt from displaying registration plates.

"Invalid vehicle" within these regulations means "a vehicle, the unladen weight of which does not exceed 254kgs and which is specially designed and constructed, and not merely adapted, for the use of a person suffering from a physical disability and solely used by that person."

The Road Traffic Act 1988 provides for the requirement to have insurance against third party risks for motor vehicles. However, vehicles meeting the definition of an invalid carriage under S185 of that Act, are exempt from the requirement to have motor insurance cover. The term "invalid carriage" has the same meaning as the term "invalid vehicle" within the Road Vehicles (Display of Registration Marks) Regulations 2001.

In short this means that if your vehicle is a class 3 invalid carriage, it will need to be registered for road use, be licensed in the "disabled" taxation class and display a nil duty vehicle licence (tax disc). It will not, however, need to display registration plates.

In order to first register and license a class 3 invalid carriage the user will need to complete form V55/5 (for used vehicles) or V55/4 (for new vehicles) and take or send it to their nearest DVLA local office (addresses can be found in information leaflet V100 - available from post offices that issue tax discs - and on www.direct.gov.uk/motoring). Evidence of the vehicle's age (or newness) will need to be submitted with the application together with documentation confirming the keeper's your name and address."

It is unlikely that most of the above will be news to many Schemes. NFSUK is confident that affiliated Schemes will be complying with the law and best practice. There is a clear understanding that affiliated Shopmobility Schemes provide equipment to users who have a temporary or permanent physical impairment that affects their mobility, and whose shopping or leisure or other experience will be enhanced by using the equipment provided. They do not have to be "severely disabled" (whatever that is supposed to mean) or registered as disabled or hold a blue badge.

In response to the article published yesterday, the DVLA and DfT

Continued on page 19

Fife Adult Learners Awards 2007

Your dear editor has won an award. Thanks to Sheena Watson Digital Fife nominating me for an award at the Fife Adult learners awards 2007. I won Information Technology Award 2007 at the Awards ceremony on the 30th of May. I am sorry to say I was unable to attend due to ill health but Sheena brought the award to me on the Thursday morning. Sheena told me that my name is being put forwards to the National Awards.



Muriel MacGregor and family took part in the Great Scottish Walk in Edinburgh on Sunday 10th June to raise funds for the Parkinson's Disease Society- Muriel is a fund raiser with the Fife Branch, details of local support, practical help and activities can be obtained from Secretary, Jean Ballantyne on 01334

828609

Muriel raised £700 on the day.

She would like to thank all who contributed.

FOR SALE **HP Photosmart D5100 series printer**



As new
Used for one week
Price new £79.99

OFFERS to
J. Carr
Treasurer
FIDN

via the FIDN Office

Sky TV has never been so user-friendly

With the Addition of Sky+ remote control-easy grip to our range of accessibility services, we're another step closer to being most user-friendly TV service in the world.

Sky+ Easy-Grip Remote Control

This is specifically designed to assist older customers, people with visual impairments and those with limited dexterity. It offers all the familiar features of the iconic Sky+ remote in two variants with different battery door options; either a textured easy-grip door or a hand strap option, to assist customers with dexterity problems.

Both versions benefit from:

- Larger and bolder graphics for easier button identification
- Raised contoured buttons with more reference points for easier identification for visually impaired users
- Increased contrast between body and remote buttons
- Compatible with all Sky+ and Sky boxes.

It was shaped by research conducted by Sky in conjunction with Scope at Beaumont College, Age Concern and disability research agency Ricability, to meet the needs of customers with minor impediments and a range of disabilities, including motor control and cognitive impairment.

Subtitling

Subtitling has been provided by Sky since 1993. Sky's Programme Services Department already provides over 429,000 hours of subtitling a year for Sky channels.

Sky provides subtitling on the following channels:

- All Sky Box Office Movies
- Sky Movies
- Sky New (20 hours a day)
- Sky One
- Sky Two
- Sky three
- Sky sports
- Sky Sports News
- Sky Travel

When pressing the TV Guide button on the remote control, the listings that have subtitles can be identified by a white banner on the programme. When selecting the programme, the subtitles will appear automatically. You'll find an easy-to-follow, step-by-step guide on how to get subtitles on our Accessibility website. www.sky.com/accessibility

Sign Language

Sign Language is a language using hand movements and facial mannerisms to represent letters, words or phrases. In 2003, the Government formally recognised the existence of British Sign Language (BSL). Used by deaf people in the UK, it has more users than the Welsh Language.

Sky has been providing in-vision sign language since 2000. Sky channels are regulated under the 2003 Communications Act for the provision of sign language.

Sky's Programme Services Department already provides over 5,000 hours of sign language a year for Sky channels.

What does Sky do?

Sky provides sign language on the following channels:-

- Sky Movies

- Sky News
- Sky One
- Sky Two
- Sky three
- Sky Sports (Saturday)
- Sky travel (times vary)

How's it done?

Six highly qualified and experienced interpreters make up Sky's sign Language Team (SSLT), and they perform live as well as pre-recorded transmissions.

How do you get it?

Any programme that carries sign language interpretation will automatically appear on your TV. For more details about Sky sign language, visit www.sky.com/accessibility

Audio Description

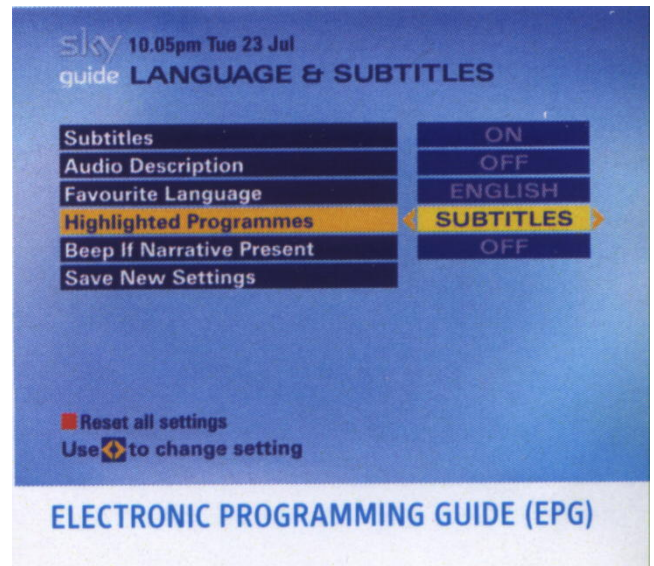
Audio Description is where an artiste verbally explains what's happening in a scene where there's no audible dialogue. Sky has been providing Audio description since 200; under the 2003 Communications Act. Sky channels are regulated for the provision of Audio description. Sky's Programme Service Department already provides over 27,000 hours of Audio description a year for Sky channels.

What do we do?

Sky provides Audio description on the following channels:

- Sky Movies
- Sky Sports
- Sky One
- Sky Two
- Sky Three
- Sky Travel

Audio description is also available on selected Sky Box Office movies, on Sky Box Office channel 744.



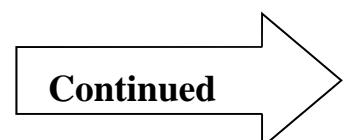
How do we do it?

Sky works with a wide variety of voice artistes voice artistes to produce the Audio description. It's down to them to explain what's happening between the gaps in dialogue, which is why they're also skilled scriptwriters. We record their voice in one of our in-house audio sites, then the Audio description soundtrack and `original soundtrack` delivered as a mixed audio through your set-top box at home.

How do you get it?

All programmes carry audio description are now easily recognised by switching on the Highlighted Programmes option. For further information, please go to www.sky.com/accessibility

Our Dedicated one-stop shop for customer service allows disabled customers to get alternative expert advice to suit their needs.



Government passes New Welfare Act 2007

disabilitynow

Disabled people will have to prepare themselves for a revamped benefits system, after the government's welfare reform bill finally received Royal Assent and became law.

The Welfare Reform Act 2007, which aims to move one million people off benefits and into work, was passed into law at the beginning of last month.

The government's welfare reform plans had been at the core of heated debate since a green paper was published in January 2005.

Under the new act, an employment support allowance (ESA) will be introduced in the autumn of 2008 to replace incapacity benefit and disability-related income support.

Disabled people who cannot work will receive a "support component" and those deemed fit for work will get a less generous "work-related component" – but the levels of benefit have not yet been decided.

A new personal capability assessment (PCA) will assess entitlement to benefit. Disabled people deemed able to work must attend work-focused interviews and other work-related activities, with the government's Pathways to Work programme, via Jobcentre Plus, playing a key role. There are potential benefits sanctions if a claimant fails to participate without good cause.

Vanessa Stanislas, director of Disability Alliance (DA), said it welcomed amendments to the bill, although concerns remained.

She applauded the amendment ensuring that only Jobcentre Plus, rather than private sector organisations, can enforce benefits sanctions.

She is pleased the act requires an independent annual review of the PCA for the next five years, which may resolve any problems with training benefits staff and GPs on how assessments are carried out.

But DA is concerned about benefit levels, details of the PCA and collection of medical evidence, and those disabled people who will not qualify for the new ESA and will have to apply for job seekers allowance. DA also fears there is not enough funding to carry out the government's plans.

This article was taken from the Disability Now website: www.disabilitynow.org.uk

Editors note:

If you would like to access a copy of The Welfare Reform Act 2007 go to website: http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2007/ukpga_20070005_en.pdf

Here's how to contact Sky's accessibility team:-

Email: accibility@bskyb.com

Web: www.sky.com/accessibility

Phone: 08705 66 33 33

Textphone: 08702 40 19 10

**USEFUL
TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Inclusion Scotland

Info@inclusionScotland.org

Tel 0141 887 7058

Fife Advocacy

Tel: 01383 511155

**Scottish Disability Equality
Forum**

Tel: 01786 446456

Citizens Advice & Rights Fife

Tel: 01592 412230

NHS/Fife Health Council

Tel: 0800 587 4008

Disability Rights Commission

Tel: 08457 622 633

FIDN OFFICE

CONTACT DETAILS:

Muriel MacGregor

West Bridge Mill

Bridge Street

Kirkcaldy KY1 1TE

Tel: 01592 203993

Fax: 01592 203786

Text Phone:

01592 646885

Email:

enquiries@fidn.co.uk

Website: www.fidn.org.uk &

www.fidn.co.uk

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

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

Scottish Charity No: SCO 26112

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

Homecheck

Tel: 01592 599599

Fife Fire and Rescue Service

Tel: 01333 439497

**Fife Constabulary Home
Security Help / Advice**

Tel: 01592 418506

**Fife Constabulary
Safety Officer (East)**

Tel: 01334 418745

Trading Standards

Tel: 01592 416830

Citizens Advice & Rights Fife

Tel: 01334 412845

**Home Energy Management
Service**

Tel: 01592 416904

Care and Repair

Tel: 01592 631661

Lochore Meadows Country Park, Crosshill, by Lochgelly.

MeadiesMobility project

Do you love the outdoors? Do you have mobility difficulties?

Then “Meadiesmobility” could be the answer. “MeadiesMobility” is a joint initiative between Lochore Meadows, Forth & Tay Disabled Ramblers (www.ftdr.com), and “Bums off Seats”, Fife’s Walking for Health initiative.

There are 2 mobility scooters and an outdoor powerchair sited at the outdoor education centre at Lochore for use by any visitor with mobility difficulties. You do not have to be a member of Forth & Tay.

How do I book a “MeadiesMobility” scooter or powerchair?

- Phone Lochore Meadows to check availability and book
- Allow sufficient time to register on arrival (at least 15 minutes)
- Tell us in advance if you have never used a scooter before. All first-time users will receive a short lesson and a competency test

Bring a passport-sized photograph (or a Fifestyle Card) and fill in the registration form. You will then be provided with an ID card.

Criteria for use:

- MUST be 18 years and over
- MUST provide photo ID and a recent utility bill or a current Fifestyle Card
- MUST use designated paths on the map provided

MUST read and sign safety information points.

The service is free but donations are welcome.

Other facilities for people with disabilities.

Not only is Lochore a great place for all the family, it is also a great place for people with disabilities. In addition to having a network of paths, many of which are suitable for mobility scooters or power chair, the Country Park has a range of specialised equipment for people with disabilities. These include a play area designed for children with disabilities, a wheely boat for disabled anglers, adapted cycles suitable for a range of abilities and sailing dinghies and canoes suitable for people with disabilities. Lochore Meadows Country Park covers 1200 acres, including a 260-acre loch with a beach, picnic areas, BBQs, a 9-hole golf course, Riding Stables, ponds, wild flower meadows, fields and woodlands. The Nature Reserve ponds have a wheelchair-accessible bird hide so there is always wildlife to be seen. A new path opens later this summer and will provide access right round the loch.

“Bums off Seats”

“Bums off Seats”, the Fife Walking for Health initiative, is a Fife-wide project, one of over 60 in Scotland. It aims to increase the number of people who walk locally for the associated health benefits.

The walk at Lochore Meadows on a Wednesday afternoon of around 2.5 miles is open to scooter and outdoor powerchair users. Please call Lochore on 01592 583343 for more information and a copy of the Lochore “Bums off Seats” programme.

NATIONAL KEY SCHEME (RADAR)

Accessible Toilets for Disabled People

Available from Fife Independent Disability Network,
West Bridge Mill, Bridge Street,
Kirkcaldy Tel: 01592 203993 Fax: 01592 203786
Text Phone: 01592 646885

Opening Hours: Tuesday - Friday 9:30am – 1pm

There are 5,600 accessible toilets in the UK using RADAR keys.

For further information please contact Muriel MacGregor at
Fife Independent Disability Network.



What does it cost? £4:50

How do I get one? Visit FIDN with identification (e.g. Blue badge) a photo copy of both sides and you will receive a key at the cost of £4:50. If it is easier simply put a cheque in the post along with identification and your address details and we will send your key to your door!

Is it only for wheelchair users? No! Speak to us for clarification. You are entitled to use a RADAR accessible toilet if you require assistance in toileting, have a visual impairment etc.

Where can I use it? All over the UK



Please Send in Letters or comment's that may be of interest to FIDN readers to the FIDN office (address on page 3). Please state for Newsletter!

Please note that this is no guarantee that it will be place in the newsletter.

**Please send any comments on this news-
letter to the FIDN office, so I can make
any improvement if necessary or if you
have something that maybe of interest
to the FIDN readers.**

Editor & Publisher: Robert A Hunter

FIDN WebSite

You can find this newsletter and previous newsletters plus lots more information on our website. www.fidn.org.uk

We now have 2 web sites the one above from Digital Fife and our new one we are building ourselves which is www.fidn.co.uk

DisabledGo –Fife – come and find out more!



DisabledGo is a national access guide available free of charge on www.DisabledGo.info which is used by over 80,000 people each month. Thanks to the pioneering support of Fife Council and Marks and Spencer Fife will soon be joining many other UK towns, cities and areas on the award winning website.

Community consultation is at the heart of what DisabledGo does. Before any action is taken to compile DisabledGo – Fife a community consultation event will be held –

**6th July
11.00-13.00pm**

**Hall B
Rothes Halls
Rothes Square, Glenrothes
Fife KY7 5NX**

The purpose of the consultation is to let as many people as possible know, and ask questions about DisabledGo. Crucially the event also aims to get as many suggestions of what local people would like to see included in their local guide.

If you would like to attend either meeting please contact Rachel Felton, Partnership Coordinator, DisabledGo – rachel.felton@disabledgo.info or call 01438 842710 to confirm your place and any specific requirements.

Buying a Scooter?

Get Mobile, a booklet published by RADAR, helps assess an individual's needs examines operating costs and advises on purchase and financial support. It includes case studies and useful contacts. To order a free copy from RADAR, contact 0207 250 3222, email radar@radar.org.uk or you can download a copy at www.radar.org.uk

Continued from page 11

yesterday, the DVLA and DfT are now working on a Press Release that will seek to correct the position as published by the Mail on Sunday.

Hopefully, the above guidance will enable you to advise clients and other users of the legal position in a clear and straight-forward way.

NFSUK will pass on the DVLA/DfT press release as soon as it becomes available. In the meantime, you might wish to contact the Mail on Sunday to advise them of your views about their articles on this matter to bring some balance back into the argument!

Scoota Mart.com

**The below photo's were taken at or Network Meeting
on the 17th of May 2007 in
The Elgin Hotel, Charlestown**



**Guest Speaker -
Maggie McDonald -
Deaf Communication
Services**



**Guest Speaker -
Alan Suttie - Fife Society
for the Blind**



**Some People in Attendance
at the meeting**

There was video's taken
at the network meeting
which may be available
for loan. For more
information please
contact the FIDN office.