



Disability Essex

(Essex Disabled People's Association Ltd)

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Richard's birthday bash!



Disability Essex Chief Executive, Richard Boyd, celebrated his 65th birthday in May – and what better place to host his birthday bash than our new HQ? It just goes to show how versatile the building is – the musicians were so impressed by the acoustics, they suggested we might like to diversify and let out the space as a recording studio!

Best wishes to you Richard – and congratulations on your many achievements as our CEO.

PassivHaus accreditation

We are pleased and proud to report that Disability Essex has been successful in achieving the PassivHaus (Passive House) standard for the Centre for Disability Studies. The fact that we are one of the first non-domestic buildings in the country to achieve this status makes our achievement all the greater. We hope to be equally successful in receiving our BREEAM accreditation later in the year.

The building's sustainable design was awarded the 'Climate Change & Good Practice Award' in Brussels in 2008.



The Passive House plaque (shown alongside) takes pride of place in our reception area, along with our other accreditations and award documents.

Holiday Caravanners—feedback please!

John Kingsbury, of the Essex-based National Association of Caravan Owners (NACO) provides copy for the nationally distributed *Holiday Caravanner* magazine, which goes out 3 times a year. The Summer 2010 edition is to feature a special feature/article profiling disabled people's issues related to their experiences as users of static holiday caravans and as customers at holiday caravan parks around the UK.

John has contacted Disability Essex, to ask if we can help with him specific 'Essex based' information—the best source of this information is obviously our disabled members and readers.

So, if you have information on good or bad experiences while on a caravanning holiday in Essex that you would like to share with John, could you please contact him direct at:

john.kingsbury@nacoservices.com

John says, 'It's as much (perhaps more) about profiling, encouraging and celebrating 'good practice' as it is about highlighting and warning against 'bad practice, whilst duly acknowledging the many disabled person's adaptations achieved by, and in the pipeline from, the various holiday caravan manufacturers.

Union activists call for public inquiry into disability hate crime

Union activists have called on the government to set up a public inquiry into the way the police deal with disability hate crime.

Delegates to the TUC's annual disability conference unanimously backed the motion, which also called on the government to pressure the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to expand its inquiry into disability-related harassment.

The motion asked the TUC to write to the new home secretary, demanding a "public acknowledgement" that the deaths of Fiona Pilkington and her disabled daughter Francesca Hardwick were a "direct result of disability hate crimes".

Despite 33 calls to the police, and years of sustained harassment and abuse, the family's complaints were not taken seriously and the harassment was never treated as potential disability hate crime.

An inquest jury concluded that the failures of the police and other public bodies contributed to Pilkington's decision to kill herself and Francesca in 2007.

Stephen Brookes, chair of the disabled members' council of the National Union of Journalists, told the conference that some magistrates he meets at conferences do not even know about the extra sentencing powers they have to deal with disability hate crime offences.

He added: "This is not anti-social behaviour. It is hostility against disabled people."

News provided by John Pring at www.disabilitynewsservice.com 20 May 2010

BLOOMING GREAT TEA PARTY

The Marie Curie Cancer Care official tea party season is from June 12 to July 12—so there is still time to organise one. For a free fundraising pack, call 08700 340 040 or visit www.mariecurie.org.uk/teaparty. Every teaparty held will help Marie Curie Cancer Care provide more nursing care and support to terminally ill people in their own homes.

Source: Thurrock CVS Speakout No.94, Spring 2010

The Disability Law Service

Run by and for disabled people, the Disability Law Service (DLS) has provided high quality information and advice to disabled and deaf people for over 30 years.

DLS provides expert legal advice and representation to disabled people, their families and carers. It is an independent, national registered charity, specialising in the following areas of law:

- Welfare Benefits
- Community Care

DLS can also advise disabled people who are being discriminated against on other grounds, such as their age, gender, or race. They publish a wide range of fact-sheets on their website.

You can find more information on the Disability Law Service website at www.dls.org.uk

Source: Shaping Our Lives Newsletter, Spring 2010, Issue 17

Day of Dance

Sports Development is hosting its first ever dancing workshop! An entire day dedicated to guiding you through the twists, turns and steps of unusual and interesting styles.

The dance session will be held on Wednesday 11th August 2010, 9.30am - 4.30pm, at The Boswells School, Burnham Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 6LY.

There will be a range of beginner dance workshops including Salsa, Zumba, American Line Dancing and Ballroom. Workshops will run throughout the day and participants are welcome to attend as many or as few as they wish. The cost is £3.00 per person for the entire day.

This event will require pre registration. Please email Shelley.WOODS@chelmsford.gov.uk with your; name, address, email address and phone number if you are thinking of attending.

The timetable will shortly be available to view at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/dayofdance.

Source: email Shelley Woods 18/05/2010

Recession has led to 'huge rise in discrimination'

The recession has led to a huge increase in discrimination faced both by disabled people in work and those looking for jobs, according to a leading union activist.

Diana Holland, an assistant general secretary of Unite, Britain's biggest union, told the TUC's annual disability conference that thousands of disabled people would lose jobs as a result of the recession.

She said she had seen a "massive increase" in the number of disabled people contacting her with work-related problems since the recession began. Holland told the conference in London that there had been an increase both in discrimination at work, and discrimination faced by those trying to find jobs.

Because of the economic situation, many disabled people were "fearful" of stating that they have access requirements at work, while employers were ignorant of the Disability Discrimination Act and reasonable adjustments.

Michelle Daley, a consultant and former member of the government's Equality 2025 advisory network of disabled people, told the conference: "The reality is that the recession should not be – but is – used to discriminate against disabled people."

News provided by John Pring at www.disabilitynewsservice.com 20 May 2010

Fire Safety

If you have sight difficulty you can put a coloured sticker on your smoke alarm or ask your local Fire Service if they can provide a coloured cover.

For people with hearing difficulty you can get a smoke alarm which uses a strobe light and vibrating pads.

If it is difficult to test your alarm you can get easy access alarms, which can be tested from the wall rather than the ceiling.

For more information visit: www.direct.gov.uk/firekills

Source: *Fire Safety, for people with sight, hearing or mobility difficulties*, ISBN 978-1-4098-0039-2

Do You 'Love Where You Live'?



Come and join the biggest ever effort to get Essex clean and tidy. You can register your event here and follow the progress of others, so what are you waiting for, register today!

Communities will also have the chance to enter the 'Best Blog' competition for the chance to win up to £500 worth of vouchers to help improve their area.

'Love Where You Live Week' events can be anything from a small five minute litter pick to carrying out helpful jobs in their street or community and can involve small or large numbers of people.

"I hope that people like me who love their county so much are able to give up some of their time to take part in Love Where You Live week – viva Essex."

Nigel Tansley-Thomas from Keep Britain Tidy, said: "Local events like 'Love Where You Live' can really make a difference to the pride and wellbeing of communities and we congratulate Essex County Council and all the local authorities of Essex for joining together for such an ambitious campaign."

For more information and to register visit www.essex.gov.uk/lwul and check out Up Coming Events

Source: email Michaela White on 17/05/2010

Disability Now

Disability Now is the only monthly magazine and website for disabled people, by disabled people. It's all about real lives and real aspirations.

For more information visit: www.disabilitynow.org.uk



Source: *disability now*, issue 31 May 2010

B&Q Waste Donation Scheme



Every B&Q store is striving to be a 'good neighbour' by forming partnerships within its local community. B&Q operates a waste donation scheme through all stores, which allows donation of waste materials, for example slightly damaged tins of paint, off cuts of timber, odd rolls of wallpaper and end of range materials, to community groups, charities, and schools.

The waste donation scheme is co-ordinated in store either by the environmental champion, duty or warehouse manager, who will keep a Waste Donation Form on file for interested groups.

Before any materials are donated, the form must be signed by a representative of the group. Please note that it is company policy that health and safety is taken into consideration – therefore electrical, petrol, and gas items are not available for donation. Any waste or surplus stock donated must not be re-sold.

Source: BDVSA newsletter, issue 62, May 2010

The new Fit Note



The Statement of Fitness for Work or 'fit note', is a new Medical Statement that GPs have been issuing since April. It replaces the old 'sick note' and aims to focus on what an employee may be able to do at work rather than what they cannot do.

For more information visit www.acas.org.uk

Source: email Richard Frost (Devon Partnership NHS Trust) Wed 12/05/2010

Helpline Volunteers

We are still looking for locally based volunteers to train as Helpline Advisors. If you would like to help disabled people—and don't mind manning a phone—please telephone Jenni Kelly on 0844 412 1771 to talk about this volunteering opportunity, or email her on jenni.kelly@disabilityessex.org.

The dangers of a DIY will

A will is one of the most important documents you can write, so why would you want to draw one up yourself rather than instructing a lawyer?



Thousands of people choose the DIY route, no doubt in order to save money. Little do they realise that it could cost their family a great deal of money in the long run, when a lawyer has to sort out the problems after the person has died and no longer there to sort it out themselves.

So, what can go wrong with a homemade will? One of the most common problems is that it may not be legally binding. Another common problem is that the will may be in such a safe place that no-one can find it!

A lawyer will usually charge between £100 and £300 for a basic Will but for this, you will be seeing a legally qualified person who will listen to what you want and advise on how your wishes can be carried out.

So don't cut corners – this could result in legal costs or, at worst, an invalid Will which could mean your estate passing to people you don't wish to benefit.

Source: FJG Outreach News, Issue 14, Summer 2010.

Please note that all responsibility for adverts within this publication is between the buyer and the seller. Disability Essex can accept no liability for equipment advertised.

We wish to remind all wheelchair users that there is a recommended wheelchair "Highway Code", copies of which we can supply on application. Furthermore, Class 3 Invalid Carriages must be registered with the DVLA.