

# FORWARD MIDLOTHIAN DISABLED



## Disabled Persons (Independent Living) Bill 2nd reading of lord Ashely's in house of Lords on December 15th 2006

The Disability Rights Commission strongly supports the Disabled Persons (Independent Living) Bill. The Bill offers the opportunity to liberate millions of people, now and in the future (people with impairments and long-term health conditions and their families/carers) from the current, over-bureaucratised, ineffective system of social care, which limits their contribution to their families,

It does this by providing a new legislative framework for independent living rooted in the principles of freedom, dignity, choice and control and geared towards greatly expanding the active participation of disabled people and those who would otherwise provide unpaid support to them in social and economic life. This builds on commitments to independent living in the Government's Life Chances report and White Paper 'Our health, our care, our say'.

Funding for social care, housing support, employment support and health services would be pooled and accessed via a single assessment – ending the current wasteful and fragmented approach.

Disabled children and adults would gain clear rights to the essential support they need to get on with their lives. For the first time disabled people could determine where they live, who they live with and how they live their lives.

Legislating for independent living is about social justice and human rights. A civilised society should simply not tolerate a situation in which disabled people can be forced to live apart from their families and are entitled to little more than being 'washed and fed'.

Legislating for independent living would boost carer's health and participation and enable us to achieve higher employment rates, better health outcomes for all and lower rates of poverty and exclusion among children and older people.

Legislation for independent living is what we must deliver to secure our future prosperity and economic growth.

Together the reforms set out in the Independent Living Bill would dramatically enhance the life chances of millions of disabled people and their families. They will reduce waste and inefficiency, promote the wellbeing and opportunities of carers as well as creating a truly sustainable approach to independent living.

Thanks to input from Equalities National Council and others the Bill builds in measures that positively address the some of the root causes of BME disabled people's exclusion from independent living services, for example: flawed assessment processes, lack of engagement with and support for user-led BME disability organisations by local agencies, lack of respect for people's different cultural and religious backgrounds, failure to provide effective race and disability equality training to care managers.

## BEWARE THE BLUE BADGE LAWS HAVE CHANGED

There are new rules for inspecting your blue badge. The reason the law has changed is to protect the people that are really in need of this blue badge scheme, to check that the badge has not been stolen and also to check that the person that the card was issued to is actually in the vehicle, also to check that the badge is in date. So who can ask to inspect your blue badge, traffic wardens, the



police and any council official. So what can they do, If the badge is being abused then they have the right to take the badge of the person who is using it and if the user refuses to show it then they will be breaking the law and can be fined and have the blue badge removed and sent back to the issuing council with a letter to explain why it was sent back and you may end up losing the blue badge forever. So make sure that it is only used when the holder is in the vehicle..

If you wish more information then please contact Scottish executive enterprise transport and lifelong learning department, aviation, ports and international division, area 2-f, Victoria quay, Leith, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ or phone them on 0131-224-0860.

This article supplied by department of transport 2006

I was watching the news on the 21st November 2006 and an article came on about blue badge parking bays, in Scotland at the moment they are provided as a courtesy, a new law is going through the Scottish parliament to make them enforceable and allow just the blue badge holders able to use them.

## If you want my bay, have my disability too

Jackie Baillie MSP formally lodged a Member's Bill proposal aimed at tackling the abuse of disabled persons parking bays.

The Disabled Persons Parking (Scotland) Bill proposed by the Labour MSP for Dumbarton has already received broad support from a Steering Group representing expertise in disability rights, equal opportunities and local government and is now set to make real progress. This help stop things like this even though you cannot see a disabled badge it



doesn't mean that there isn't one but it is highly unlikely.

Speaking at the launch of the paper. Jackie Baillie said "Abuse of disabled persons parking needs to be tackled." And also "I am delighted to have the active support of leading disability organisations including the Disability Rights Commission, Inclusion Scotland and the Scottish Disability Equality Forum in helping to develop this Bill. Hopefully we will improve the experience of disabled people accessing parking bays in future."

Jackie Baillie is keen to get a wide range of views on her proposal. Anyone wishing to participate in the consultation process can contact her for a copy of the consultation paper. The consultation period ends on 26 February 2007. Copies of the consultation paper can be obtained by calling 0131 348 5905 or e-mailing [jackie.baillie.msp@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:jackie.baillie.msp@scottish.parliament.uk). Forward Mid will develop their formal response to this consultaion at the meeting on February 8th 2007 at the open door in penicuik. If you would like to express a view, all are welcome.

## HELPING THE NHS HELP

### YOU



Forward MID with the aid of Catherine Evens made their first trip to a Medical centre in Midlothian to help them understand more about the needs of disabled people.

Marlene Gill, Catherine Evens and Iain Tait visited Pathhead medical centre in November 2006, we were all received very well and were allowed to move around the medical centre and look at the what could be done to help them receive disabled as equals. Pathhead Medical practice is well laid out and with an assortment of differing size chairs in the waiting room, we were very impressed with the reception staff there was even a lowered table for wheelchair users and they would announce if the doctors are running late, the doctors also came to the waiting room to pick up and deposit patients, there was a dispensary in the medical centre. To Get a full information pack or you would like to go on one of the visits then please contact Catherine Evens at [Catherine.Evens@lpct.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Catherine.Evens@lpct.scot.nhs.uk) or Eric Johnstone at the MVA office on 663-9471



## Newbattle abbey college

And

### Forward MID

On December 6th 2006 Newbattle abbey college published their disability equality paper, Forward MID is Midlothian's disabled group they had input into this document time and effort, and now we will have to wait and see if it now makes a difference to both staff and students. Forward Mid would like to thank Newbattle abbey college for their hospitality on the launch of disability equality duty document, we hope that this shows what can be done with some forethought.

Disability equality duty is to be laid down by December 4th 2006 and as far as forward MID know this is the first service provider to do this in Midlothian. Pictured above Members of Forward MID group and Members of staff from Newbattle Abbey college

## Fancy a weekend break

If you a planning a weekend break in the U.K. and would like to find out if is accessible for your needs? Then take a look at the disability view city guides, for once this web site covers Scotland's cities and not just Edinburgh and Glasgow and they don't hold back, if somewhere is not fully accessible they do inform you what is and what is not on the date that they visited which is also displayed.

How to contact them: they or on the web at [www.disabilityview.co.uk](http://www.disabilityview.co.uk), or by writing to Craven Publishing Limited, 15-39 Durham Street, Kinning Park, Glasgow G41 1BS, or by phone at 0141 419 0044

## No Access At The Inn

A Scottish hotel has lost a court case for failing to for failing to supply disabled access. Isaac Curran from Wishaw, with the aid of the Disability rights commission raised a court case against the Redstones Hotel in Bothwell, Lanarkshire. The Hotel paid £3000 in compensation to Mr Curran and £2000 to the disability rights commission. So if you feel you have been unjustly denied access then please contact the D.R.C Scottish Media Office on 0131-527-4044 and talk to them and see if they can get things changed.

## Seasonal Affective Disorder

Now that Christmas is over and also New Year and it is cold and there is not much daylight. A lot of people especially disabled people, who find it difficult to get out and about, or are wheelchair users when it snows, suffer from depression commonly known as SAD.

SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder) is a type of winter depression that affects an estimated half a million people every winter between September and April; in particular during December, January and February.

Light therapy has been shown to be effective in up to 85 per cent of diagnosed cases. That is, exposure, for up to four hours per day (average 1-2 hours) to very bright light, at least ten times the intensity of ordinary domestic lighting. The Seasonal affective disorder association Information Pack contains full details of SAD treatments, where to obtain light therapy equipment and how to use it, it also advises on how to hire how to hire light fixtures, trying out light treatment, how to adapt your lifestyle, clinics, books, recent research,

Information for GPs the pack costs £5.00 from SAD Association, PO Box 989, Steyning, BN44 3HG, England or visit them on the web at [www.sada.org.uk](http://www.sada.org.uk)

It is also possible to buy bright lamps and they range from around £69.00 upwards

### Anti-Virus

Feel like your computer is not working properly then you may have a virus, virus's attack computers and destroy or send your details to hackers and they use this information against you for such things as identity theft!

If like me you like to get things for free Anti Virus Grisoft allow you to download a free antivirus which is updated regularly they also have a free anti-spyware you can find all the free stuff at <http://free.grisoft.com>. There is just one clause it can only be used on personal computers and is not designed for company computers. Normal Anti-Virus and Anti-spyware can cost up to £50 or more per year. Remember if your computer is virus free it will work a lot faster.



### Farewell to 2006

Forward MID bid farewell to 2006 with their final meeting being held in the Blacksmith's Forge in Dalkeith the new public house opened by J D Wetherspoons which opened on the 11th December 2006. Not much of interest was discussed at this meeting.

But a good time was had by all that attended they have a good selection of ale's and also serve coffee's and tea's the meals were very appetizing and well presented. There is a disabled toilet at the rear of the premises and is opened by the radar key, if you do not have one then the staff behind the bar will open it for you. If you wish to purchase your own radar key please see July 2006 issue of Forward MID newsletter or visit Forward MID on line at [www.forwardmid.org.uk](http://www.forwardmid.org.uk).

We at Forward MID are looking Forward to this 2007 being a year of action as a lot of things are happening to make life easier.

### Alternative Publications

The editions of the Forward MID newsletters are available in large print or a E-mail publications For alternative publication please E-mail to [eric.johnstone@mvacva.org.uk](mailto:eric.johnstone@mvacva.org.uk) or call Eric Johnstone on 0131-663-9471 or write to him at MVA 4-6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith EH22 1AE with your request.