

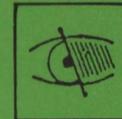
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NOTTS COALITION of DISABLED PEOPLE

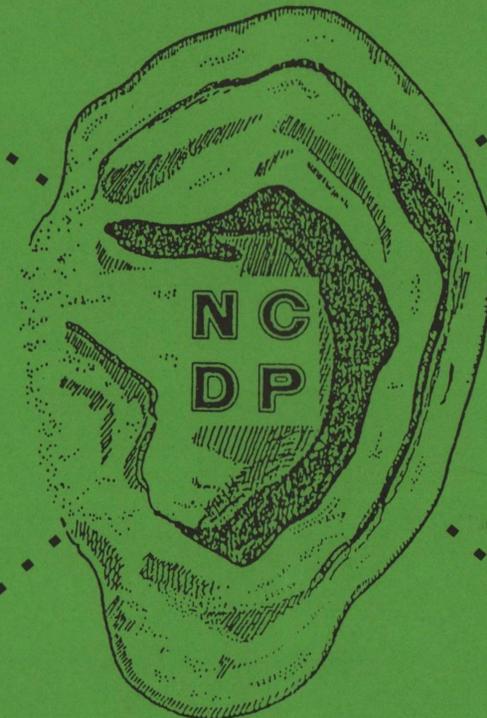
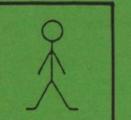
THE VOICE OF THE DISABLED

We would like to hear your

suggestions



comments



views



ideas



ALL CONTRIBUTIONS TO:-

TONY OLIVER,
23, NORMANBY ROAD,
WOLLATON,
NOTTINGHAM,
NG8 2TA.

EDITORIAL

Since the last Edition of the Voice of the Disabled a large amount of water has flowed under the bridge. The most important thing is that the Conservative Party are confirmed in government for up to five years, and that the largest district council in the County has also gone that way. This is disheartening, for despite the protestations of that party, a lot of the more severely disabled are going to be a lot worse off because of the recently passed Act coming into force next April. We have lost round one, maybe because we did not put our arguments cogently enough. However we would be failing ourselves and the disabled people that are children or yet unborn, if we throw in the towel now, or at any other stage. The fight will be won when we get real choice, over our own lives, and incidently carers have some rights and recognition as people doing a real and worthwhile job not only personally but for the economy.

The present Conservative Party believes as a matter of faith in the "philosophy of the market place". It wants therefore to obtain maximum value for every pound of taxpayers and ratepayers money that it puts into services; and like it or not we have to look to their agenda not ours. The most telling point will be that we ARE the consumers of Services, we have with our limited incomes in the shape of V.A.T. to pay the bill now, that in future when 20% of any rate bill comes thudding on the doormat, we shall pay more of the bill, and when Community Charges are levied we shall pay even more of the bill. Therefore we should have a larger say in what should be provided, and we constitute the only quality control which can really be effective.

Please then, if you have any complaint about the services

that you receive then get in touch with your councillor, if you feel dismayed at any benefits that you are not getting then write to your M.P., or go to his surgery and speak to him, after all he too is supported by your tax bill. If you can't find either then drop a line to any member of the committee, after all we are here to serve the membership not ourselves.

In this edition Kathleen Archer and myself would like to present the correspondence that we have written to and received from our M.P.s, in the hope that you may also want to make your consumer's voice heard.

Tony Oliver.

SMALL AD

For sale:- Renault 18 Estate Automatic. February 1984 Gold Metallic. One private owner. Full Service History. 9-Way switch on steering knob. Y-bar for left/right foot accelerator. Ideal for Hemiplegia sufferer. L2950. Available January 1988.

Phone A.W.Oliver. Nottingham 285967.

For sale:- Lark 3-Wheeled Electric Chair. 4-months old. Excellent condition. L850 o.n.o.

Phone A.Frearson. Nottingham 258071.

SMALL ADS 5p PER WORD.

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Ways & Means

Ludlow Hill Road
West Bridgford
Nottingham NG2 6HD
Telephone (0602) 234251



CAN HAL COME OUT TO PLAY?

I hope this cry will gone up in hundreds of homes in the near future. Hal's pals are a range of dolls with disabilities for children of all ages who have the imagination to realise that the world consists of all sorts of people. It is valuable as a concept for disabled children to have a positive self image, and even more valuable to able bodied children to make-believe with a doll with which they might not to be able to identify directly. We as a co-alition applaud the concept and hope that the venture is successful. Details are available from Nottingham Rehab (TEL 234251.)

West Bridgford
Nottingham NG2 6HD
Telephone (0602) 234251

RESOURCE CENTRE FOR THE DISABLED.

On the 1st July 1987 Aileen Hickman was appointed Manager of the Centre. She was previously in Leicestershire. She has begun to appoint the staff and to obtain the displays of various aids and equipment that she will to advise disabled people. This will take time so please do not expect an instant reply to your query. In fact I suggest you telephone before visiting the centre, in order to to enable her to prepare individual requirements. There is a temporary answering machine installed so your call will not be wasted, and the administrative assistant will be appointed from 14th September.

The address is:-

THE LENTON BUSINESS CENTRE,
LENTON BOULEVARD,
NOTTINGHAM.

TEL. 420391.

As some of you may know I contacted the COUNTRYWIDE WORKSHOPS TRUST SHOP in Drury Lane, London. Mrs. Valerie Wood-Gaiger, the founder of the project, asked me to consult with the membership to try to start a similar venture here in this area as their associated catalogue is already overworked. To this end I have already contacted a lady, through the Gedling Group, who is a qualified teacher of Handicrafts.

It is up to you to contact the resource centre with your ideas or requirements for aids or adaptations, for it only your own willingness to do something that is the end product. If your particular need is not met by a commercially available product then it is the function of R.E.M.A.P. to help, and the resulting

idea may be able to be adapted to meet someone else's requirements as well as your own.

Recently a sum of £500 has been made available for a specific piece of equipment by the TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANK and this will help considerably in the purchasing of a computer the Centre need.

All this adds up to "thy will be done." For any further details please contact me or another member of the Committee.

Roger Paulson,
Thorneywood,
Foxwood Lane,
Woodborough,
Nottingham.
Tel. 652260.

Thank you Roger for all your zealous work with R.E.M.A.P., The next initiative will have to come from the membership or the carers who have hourly knowledge of the problems faced by disabled people. I commend this scheme to the membership, not only because it will enable you to have personalised aids and adaptations but also without your support this scheme will be said by the costcutters to be uneconomic. (Ed.)

Classical Hire Ltd.
101 CHILWELL RD. BEESTON,
NOTTINGHAM. NG8 1ES
TEL (0532) 257008
VAT No. 4889 2800

DISABLED CHRISTIANS FELLOWSHIP

In addition to the local branch meeting at West Bridgford, mentioned in the last edition, there is another venue and time for the Fellowship to get together.

MEETINGS

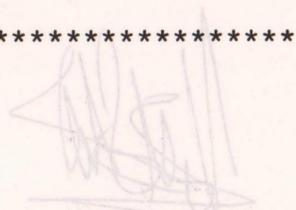
Fourth Monday of each month 2.30-4.30 pm at St. Mary's Church Hall, Wollaton Hall Drive, Wollaton Park. (opposite Main Entrance to Queens Medical Centre)

Anyone interested please contact:-

Felicity Ashdown, (Secretary)
22, Harby Drive,
Wollaton Park,
NG8 1AR. (Tel 281330)

Sally Hall, (Chairman)
28, Maidstone Drive,
Wollaton,
NG8 2RF. (Tel 285387)

I acknowledge with thanks, receipt of your D.C.F. Monthly Journal. Perhaps when the Co-alition moves into its offices in Park Row, all such literature could be sent there, as a Resource Centre and Exchange & Mart. for all Journals interested in welfare of disabled whether material or spiritual.


Nigel Skil
Managing Director

Classical Hire Ltd.

104 CHILWELL RD, BEESTON,
NOTTINGHAM. NG9 1ES.

TEL. (0602) 257006

VAT No. 4989 3800

21st July 1987.

Dear Tony,

By lucky chance I picked up a copy of "The Voice of the Disabled" last week and, after reading it, felt I ought to write and tell you about our company and our plans for the future.

Since 1979 Alex Smith Coachways have operated the only privately owned luxury coaches with wheelchair lifts in the area and consequently we have gained valuable experience of the particular needs of the disabled.

As a company we feel strongly that the holiday and travel needs of the disabled are not as well served as they ought to be and so we aim to improve this situation.

By talking and listening to disabled people we can establish what are the problems, what is needed and how best we can go about fulfilling their needs. We have also written to tourist boards, hoteliers, ferry companies and tour operators, asking for information of facilities for the disabled.

Nottinghamshire County Council have also been very helpful and have offered assistance to improve access to our ABTA Travel Agency for wheelchair users.

Eventually, our aim is to make holiday-making as easy as possible for a greater number of disabled people by the following means:-

1. Provide a full information service to help with specific needs.
2. Improve our Travel Agency - i.e. eliminating steps, widening doors, lowering brochure racks and desks.
3. Sell our range of purpose designed holidays both at home and abroad, especially for the disabled.
4. Increase our coach fleet to facilitate travel for different sizes and types of disabled groups.
5. Employ a Sales team to go out and visit housebound people to discuss their individual holiday requirements.

If you or your members have any suggestions on our proposals, I would be delighted to hear from you and discuss how we can best provide the service that you want.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

ALEX SMITH COACHWAYS.

Nigel Skill.
Managing Director.

From: The Rt. Hon. Kenneth Clarke QC., MP



Mrs V. Dawson,
3 Middle Avenue,
Off First Avenue,
Carlton,
Notts.

Mr. T. Oliver,
23 Normanby Road,
Wollaton,
Notts.

3rd August, 1987

Dear Mr. Oliver,

By chance I picked up in my office building a copy of your magazine and read the letter from Mrs Layton regarding the disabled adaptations done on her council property paid for by herself, and sadly, unnecessarily so.

May I point out, and stress, the fact that any problems facing disabled people can be discussed with Social Services who will advise on all manner of difficult situations. I know, I work for them.

Please let your readership know that they can contact their local Social Services Office; ask for the Duty Officer and explain the problem. They will either get advice there and then, or an Officer will visit at a later date.

Have you ever thought of trying to recruit a Social Worker into your scheme as as advisor on rights, on a voluntary basis?

Yours faithfully,

Val Dawson

Mrs. V. Dawson

Mrs. K. Archer,
Chairman,
Notts. Coalition of Disabled People,
9 Lansdown Drive,
West Bridgford,
Nottingham.

LC

Classical Hire Ltd.

104 CHILWELL RD, BEESTON,

NOTTINGHAM, NG5 1ES.

TEL (0302) 25708

VAT No. 499 290

The Rt.Hon. Kenneth Clarke QC.,MP.
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA.

15th August 1987

Dear Kenneth Clarke,

Thank you for your letter of 31st July 1987. Your comments on the proposed community charge, are much appreciated, particularly those relating to proposed increases in pensions to meet this cost.

However, I feel that you fail to answer my particular question in relation to consideration of those disabled people whose homes are currently 'D' rated.

I agree that a great deal of the press comment is, purely speculation. It was because of this that I made a decision on behalf of my members, to come to you for comment and advice. Are you trying to tell me, that no consideration has been given to 'D' rating? If this is the case then I would appreciate your saying so. Surely, that would be the honest thing to do?

What I would like, is an answer for my members, even if it be "No, we have not yet discussed the implications for those people who are currently 'D' rated."

I would also appreciate your consent to print your replies in our newsletter. We shall of course, fully understand if you are unable to give this consent.

Yours sincerely

Kathleen Archer

Kathleen Archer (mrs)
Chairman: NCDP

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

ALEX SMITH COACHWAYS.



Nigel Skitt,
Managing Director.

From: The Rt. Hon. Kenneth Clarke QC., MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

31st July, 1987.

Dear Mrs. Archer,

Thank you very much for your recent letter. I think the proposed community charge will be a fairer method of taxation than the present rating system because it will spread the costs of local government amongst the adult population who put their councillors into power. There will of course be compensating increases in pensions and benefit for those who require help with the bill. Given that most local government expenditure is already paid for out of general taxation, we will still have a situation where people on higher incomes will contribute much more of the cost of local government than those on low incomes. Pensioners in properties of high rateable value should particularly benefit from the system.

I think this will all become much clearer when the details of our proposals are published in the autumn. A great deal of the comment in the press at the moment is based on speculation about the effect of changes, when important details have not yet been finally decided in the discussions going on within the Government. We will obviously have to take account of the differing needs of deprived areas of the country and low income households, as well as those who are disabled or on benefit.

I can assure you that the disadvantaged in our society will not be overlooked in determining the new system for collecting local taxation.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs. K. Archer,
Chairman,
Notts. Coalition of Disabled People,
9 Lansdown Drive,
West Bridgford,
Nottingham.

Kathleen Archer (Mrs)
Chairman: NCDP.

From: The Rt. Hon. Kenneth Clarke QC., MP



The Rt. Hon. Kenneth Clarke QC., MP
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
LON DON SW1A 0AA

15th August 1987

Dear Kenneth Clarke,

Nottinghamshire Coalition OF Disabled People, is a campaigning organisation of disabled People. We believe very much that disabled people should have full control of their own lives. We encourage the active participation of disabled people, in improving the overall quality of their lives.

We endeavour to work with statutory services and, ~~service providers~~ Where and when possible, we prefer to consult rather than confront.

We were formally constituted in June 1984, since when my home has been our office. Our monthly committee meetings are held in Mansfield, so that as far as possible no one has to travel from one end of the county to the other.

As you can imagine, trying to run such an organisation from ones sitting room, is not an ideal situation. We are now looking forward to moving into our own premises in December 1987.

We are currently funded by Nottinghamshire County Council, Social Services Dept., for £1,500.00 p.a.. Officers are presently trying to find monies for the rent etc., and equipment we shall need. Revenue costs are likely to increase due to demand. As far as we are able to ascertain they are not able to fund a worker for us, for some considerable time. However, they do admit that there is a need.

We do have sufficient numbers of members, prepared to staff the office on a voluntary basis. The benefits to them in doing this will I hope, be many. Not only will they be using skills which they already have, but will also be increasing their skills, apart from the personal satisfaction and improved confidence.

What I would like to be able to do, is to pay those members Therapeutic Earnings, for hours worked. My problem, and it is a large one, is who would provide the money for this? It occurred to me that you maybe able to advise me on this matter. Would there be any monies available from Central Government?

I would appreciate any advice and help you are able to offer.

Could you possibly spare me some time, when you are in your constituency?

Yours sincerely,

Kathleen Archer. (Mrs)
Chairman: NCDP.

Mrs. K. Archer,
Chairman,
Nottinghamshire Coalition of Disabled People,
9 Lansdown Drive,
West Bridgford,
Nottingham.

From: The Rt. Hon. Kenneth Clarke QC., MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

22nd August, 1987

Dear Mrs. Archer,

Thank you for your letter to Mr. Clarke concerning the Nottinghamshire Coalition of Disabled People. Mr. Clarke is away from his office at present, but I will of course bring your letter to his attention on his return, and no doubt he will write to you then. In the meantime, I have taken up the points you raised in your letter with the Department of Health and Social Security, to see if they have any suggestions regarding possible extra funding for your Group.

Yours sincerely,

Deborah Sugg

Deborah Sugg
Secretary to Kenneth Clarke QC MP

Mrs. Kathleen Archer,
9 Lansdown Drive,
West Bridgford,
NOTTINGHAM NG2 7FJ.

Tony Oliver

The Rt. Hon. Kenneth Clarke O.C., M.P.
23, Normanby Road,
Wollaton,
Nottingham,
NG8 2TA.



24th July 1987.

The Rt. Hon. Kenneth Clarke O.C., M.P.
Councillor John M. Carter, M.B.E., J.P.
Adam House,
The Park,
Nottingham.
NG1 1BD.

Dear Councillor Carter,

I refer to my telephone call of Tuesday with regard to the Community Charge proposals which are currently under scrutiny in the policy of the governing party of both the City and the United Kingdom. In essence my plea is that when the policy is finally settled disabled people should not be further disadvantaged by having their rates relief abolished with the rating system.

Under the Rating (Disabled Persons) Act 1978 reductions are available to those people with substantial and permanent disabilities and are not means tested. These are :-

- i) for a room other than a bathroom or a lavatory - according to the local rate in the L on L30
- ii) an additional bathroom - according to the local rate in the L on L20.
- iii) a garage - according to the local rate in the L on L25
- iv) also additional relief may be granted on floor space for a wheelchair, central heating, additional lavatory or any other facility that increases the rateable value of the home.

These are valuable reductions, in the fact that they reduce the hidden costs of disability, and when wisely used increase the stock and the condition of housing which can be accessed and used by people with disabilities. Can I urge the majority party of both national and local government to consider this point and the resultant hardship to people with disabilities whether working or not if the matter goes unnoticed? Perhaps a way forward would be to make a passport benefit any one of the following benefits :-

- i) the severe disability allowance.
- ii) the attendance allowance.
- iii) the mobility allowance.

In that way the relief could be monitored in such a way it would be available only to those people who were least able to stand such a charge.

I personally have extreme doubts at the wisdom of a community charge, believing that people who own property should be charged a levy on the amount of property that they own, and that the Banks, Building Societies, and other financial institutions have a far more accurate measure of peoples ability to pay for community services in granting credit facilities. However if the policy is to be a community charge then it has to be justly administered and with due account taken of individual circumstances as outlined above.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Kathleen Archer (Mrs)
Chairman NCDP.

Tony Oliver.

MARTIN M. BRANDON BRAVO M.P.



30th July, 1987

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr A Oliver
23 Normanby Rd
Wollaton
Nottingham
NG8 2TA

Dear Tony,

My colleague Cllr John Carter has given me a photo copy of your letter to him dated the 24th July, and I write to assure you that my understanding of the proposed legislation is that the disabled will not be disadvantaged by the changes.

I enclose a photo copy of page eight of the Scottish bill which indicates the total exemption of those classified as severely mentally handicapped, and also page twenty one of the same bill, where in clause 24, it indicates the on-going provision for rebates under the Housing benefit mechanism.

Since until my transfer to the Home Office I was in the Department of Environment, I want to maintain a specific interest in these proposals, and will make enquiries and write to you again in due course.

Do please be assured that this particular aspect of the proposed legislation will be watched with great care.

Yours sincerely,

cc: Cllr John Carter

Encls:

23, Normanby Road,
Wollaton,
Nottingham,
NG8 2TA.

9th August 1987.

Martin M. Brandon Bravo M.P.
House of Commons
LONDON,
SW1A 0AA.

Dear Martin,

Thank you for your letter of 30th July in response to my enquiry of Councillor Carter on the 24th. My congratulations at obtaining a post at the Home Office where perhaps you may have a little more chance, as a M.P. out of that department, to use your influence rather than toe the departmental line.

I am grateful for the enclosures and agree with this principle of exemption as far as it goes. However Scots Law is notoriously difficult to translate into English Law, and I know my friends and colleagues in the Notts. Coalition of Disabled People will be far from happy to be "lumped" together with the severely MENTALLY handicapped. I have already outlined some proposals with my letter of the 24th July, and these should stand as the criteria for exemption as they do now, in the present Rating System. The other approach is to analyse the O.P.C.S. data and not only use this in the determination of levels of Benefit, but also to determine the levels on which Community Charge ought to be exempted. This will determine the ability to pay in terms of needs balanced by disposable income.

I look forward to any consultation papers that may be forthcoming before the Government produces a draft Bill.

Yours sincerely,

copies Cllrs Bradbury & Carter.

I personally have extreme doubts as to the wisdom of a community charge, believing that people who own property should be charged a levy on the amount of property that they own, and that the Banks, Building Societies, and other financial institutions have a far more accurate measure of people's ability to pay for community services in granting credit facilities. However if the policy is to be a community charge then it has to be justly administered and with due account taken of individual circumstances as circumstances.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Encs:
Tony Oliver.