

THE BULLETIN

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countycouncil

Spring Issue 2008

disABILITY
is our business



**working together,
working with others**

Regular readers may notice the slight but important changes in our logo above right. In preparing to spend a day working with others in Wyre Forest with overlapping interests in the diverse peoples who make up our community the issue of partnership came to the fore. The modifications made for that day seemed appropriate to incorporate to our general materials as they are refreshed. It's action not just words and central to our operations and strategy.

disABILITY: Celebrating Diversity

Readers may not be aware but the Dial team includes many with a disability, like the population at large some more evident than others. The abilities that are used and developed in providing the services that Dial offers are sometimes brought to the organisation and sometimes acquired within after joining. In early winter, at Kidderminster, we and partners celebrated the diverse abilities of those categorised as disabled, including many not known for their disability but for other things and great achievement. We are planning to role out these activities across North Worcestershire this year.

Watch out for details and join us.



There are other Kidderminster event photos on our website, www.nwdial.org.uk why not have a look?

Stop Press:

Volunteers for the Bulletin Editorial Advisory Group needed, contact the office. Four meetings per year, or email contact.

Don't you just Hate Crime

Six victims of hate incidents have received valuable support following the launch of the **Bromsgrove Hate Incident Partnership (BHIP)**.

The Partnership, which is lead by Bromsgrove District Council and Bromsgrove District Housing Trust, includes groups and organisations such as Victim Support, the Police and key representatives of the District's diverse communities.

It was launched earlier this year to give support and a voice to people who are victims of hate incidents and are targeted simply because of their race, age, gender or sexuality to name a few. Hate Crime takes many forms including physical attacks or threat of attacks, verbal abuse or insults.

The **BHIP's** is in the process of developing reporting centres across the town and are holding workshops with community groups to raise awareness of the **BHIP** and what hate incidents are.

If you feel you are a victim of hate incidents or want to find out where your **nearest reporting centre is**, call **01527 881288** or click on the Council's website **www.bromsgrove.gov.uk**

If you, your group or organisation would like to take part in an **awareness raising workshop** or become a **Hate Crime reporting centre**. Contact **Graham Rocke** at **Bromsgrove District Council** on **01527 881486**

There are similar and linked arrangements in **Redditch** and **Wyre Forest**.

Redditch

Redditch Anti Harassment Partnership (RAHP)

Call the Community Safety Team on **01527 534187**

Wyre Forest

Wyre Forest Hate Incident Partnership (WFHIP)

Call the Community Safety Team on **01562 732752**

North Worcestershire Dial

Call **01562 746890** covering all Districts

Hi i'm Toni



My name is Toni Woolley and I am employed by Worcestershire County Council, Adult and Community Services as a Housing Project Officer. I work with people who have a physical disability and / or sensory impairment and primarily with adults the aged between 18-65. A part of my role is to promote awareness of the housing needs of people with a disability with the district councils, housing providers and housing related supported services.

I currently work with those individuals with specific housing difficulties as well as undertaking a strategic role in future planning. For example: exploring other housing options such as shared ownership, www.home2own.uk.com and Advanced Housing Association.

Referrals for support can be made either by a physical disability team social worker, physical disability Support services or Connect day opportunities. I am also able to attend service user and carer groups' meetings to discuss housing related issues.

My base is in Bromsgrove but I cover the whole of Worcestershire and can be contacted on **01527 556256**

Expansion of free bus travel in England

Since 1 April 2008, eligible users have been entitled to free off-peak travel on local buses anywhere in **England**.

If you have any questions about the delivery of passes, please contact your local pass provider.

Are you eligible?

If you are resident in England and are aged 60 or over or are '**eligible disabled**' you are entitled to England-wide concessionary bus travel.

What is 'eligible disabled'?

You are eligible disabled if you:

- are blind or partially sighted
- are profoundly or severely deaf
- are without speech
- have a disability, or have suffered an injury, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to walk
- do not have arms or have long-term loss of the use of both arms
- have a learning disability - a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind which includes significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning, or
- would, if you applied for a licence to drive a motor vehicle under Part III of the Road Traffic Act 1988, have your application refused under section 92 of the Act (**physical fitness**) on grounds other than persistent misuse of drugs or alcohol

What does the new pass entitle you to?

Since 2006 you have been entitled to the statutory minimum concession of free local bus travel in your area from **9.30 am to 11.00 pm** on **Monday to Friday** and at any time during **weekends** and **public holidays** - and this will continue.

Since 1 April 2008 you are also entitled to **free local bus travel** in all other areas of **England** during off-peak times **9.30 am to 11.00 pm** on **Monday to Friday** and at any time during **weekends** and **public holidays**.

Local authorities may offer extra benefits to their residents as part of their concessionary scheme, **for example**, free or reduced off-peak tram or rail travel, or free bus travel before 9.30 am Monday to Friday.

However, these additional benefits will normally only be available to that region's own residents. So if you visit an area that offers additional services, you probably won't be entitled to them – make sure you check first with the relevant authority.

How to get a concessionary travel pass

If you have not yet applied for an England-wide bus pass, or have only just become eligible, you will need to apply to your local pass provider. As part of the application you'll need to:

- prove your eligibility
- prove that you're a permanent resident of your area
- supply a recent passport-style photograph for your new pass

North Worcestershire Authorities are:

Bromsgrove District Customer Service Centre

Adjacent to the Dolphin Centre, School Drive, Bromsgrove B60 1AY
Telephone 01527 881288

Redditch One Stop Shop

Redditch Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch B98 8AH
Telephone 01527 64252

Wyre Forest Customer Service Centre

Kidderminster Town Hall, Vicar Street, Kidderminster DY10 1DA
Telephone 01562 732928

If you want more information on bus passes go to:

www.direct.gov.uk/buspass

or locally at:

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/concessionarytravelpass

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

We are sure many of you will be aware of the media coverage surrounding Incapacity Benefit and the changes that the government have introduced as part of the Welfare Reform Act.

Incapacity Benefit (**IB**) is due to be replaced by a new benefit called Employment and Support Allowance (**ESA**).

Rather than go into great detail about the new benefit it is perhaps best to describe the expected transition into **ESA** from **IB** and to give details for organisations that can offer you advice.

ESA begins for new claimants on the **27th of October 2008**. People who are already on Incapacity Benefit at present will eventually be moved across to **ESA**. It does seem the process will be gradual, with IB claimants **under 25 years old** being put forward for the new Work Capability Assessment (**WCA**) from **April 2009**. If they pass they will keep their **old benefit** with no timeline yet announced for their transfer to ESA. At present it seems that for IB claimants **over the age of 25** the **WCA's** will not begin until **April 2010**.

Further advice can be sought from your local Citizen's Advice Bureau, Job Centre Plus or **Community Legal Advice on 0845 345 4345**.

Citizen's Advice Bureaux

Bromsgrove:	01527 831480
Redditch:	0845 415 2221
Wyre Forest:	01562 823953

Job Centre Plus

Bromsgrove	01527 483600
Redditch	01527 483900
Kidderminster	01562 623800

Job Centre Plus - Disability Employment Advisers

Bromsgrove	01527 483652
Redditch	01527 483999
Kidderminster	01562 623822

New Benefit Rates from April 2008

	2007 Rate	2008 Rate
<u>Attendance Allowance (AA)</u>		
High Rate	£64.50	£67.00
Low Rate	£43.15	£44.85
<u>Disability Living Allowance (DLA)</u>		
Care Component (DLA)		
Higher	£64.50	£67.00
Middle	£43.15	£44.85
Lower	£17.10	£17.85
Mobility Component (DLA)		
Higher	£45.00	£46.75
Lower	£17.10	£17.75
<u>Carer's Allowance (CA)</u>	£48.65	£50.55
<u>Incapacity Benefit (IB)</u>		
Long-term IB	£81.35	£84.50
Short-term IB <u>under</u> state pension age		
Low Rate	£61.35	£63.75
High Rate	£72.55	£75.40
Short-term IB <u>over</u> state pension age		
Low Rate	£78.05	£81.10
High Rate	£81.35	£84.50
Severe Disablement Allowance		
Basic Rate	£49.15	£51.05

All rates are weekly

“No Barriers Awards” An award evening is being held in Wyre Forest during May to recognise businesses and individuals who have given **“extra special commitment”** to inclusive access in the District.

Established in memory of **Mike Oborski**, the award is intended to encourage people to go that extra mile when providing services, access, or employment.

The Council and some local voluntary organisations including Dial have collaborated in agreeing the winners.

Useful Contacts

Disability Living Allowance / Attendance Allowance Helpline:	08457 123456
Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL):	0800 88 22 00
Pension Credit:	0800 99 1234
Social Services:	0845 6072000
Out of hours Emergency Number:	01905 768020
Worcestershire Carer's Unit:	0800 3892896
Worcestershire Association of Carers:	01905 26500
Blue Badge Offices:	
Bromsgrove District Customer Service Centre:	01527 881288
Redditch One Stop Shop:	01527 534123
Wyre Forest Customer Service Centre:	01562 732928
Community Legal Advice (CLA):	0845 3454345
Age Concern Bromsgrove & District:	01527 871840
Age Concern Redditch & District:	01527 584653
Age Concern Kidderminster & Wyre Forest:	01562 827788

NW DIAL can help with your queries about all manner of issues related to impairment / disability, access, holidays, discrimination, support organisations both local and national, transport etc. We can also help with form filling.

Helpline: 0800 970 7202
Office: 01562 60241
Fax & Minicom : 01562 68248
Text Line: 075 000 27 030
Email: info@nwdial.org.uk
Website: www.nwdial.org.uk

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