

THE BULLETIN

Autumn Issue
2004

Community
Legal Service



Welcome

In this, our third edition, we will be focusing on providing information in direct response to Readers' feedback.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to send us their feedback forms. Accompanying The Bulletin is a new feedback sheet, if there are any issues you would specifically like us to cover in the next issue, please send it back to us. If you would prefer you can ring our free phone Helpline and leave a message on 0800 970 7202.

We look forward to hearing from you and providing you with useful information and contacts.

An Opportunity Not to be Missed

The EAGA PARTNERSHIP run the Government funded WARM FRONT grant. They provide 100% grant for essential heating and insulation improvements in your home. The grants are aimed at people who own their own home or rent from a private landlord.

There are two different grants available. **The Warm Front Grant** is available for **anyone who is under 60** and in receipt of any disability related benefit i.e. any Disability Living Allowance etc. (and anyone who has children under 16 and gets income support, council tax benefit or housing benefit).

The benefits of the warm front grant are a warmer, healthier home, lower fuel bills and a reduction in energy waste. Properties are surveyed by the warm front team and all the work carried out is done to the highest standard. Loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, draught proofing and additional heat sources might be included in their recommendations, up to a value of £1500. There are absolutely no catches.

If you are over 60 and in receipt of Income support, pension credit, housing benefit or council tax benefit you might be eligible for **The Warm Front plus Grant**, this funds work up to a value of £2500 and includes work to the central heating not covered by the grant for under 60s.

You can check whether you are eligible and apply for the grants by calling EAGA on **free phone 0800 316 6011**.

You can also apply directly online at www.eaga.co.uk.

Special points of interest:

- The Warm Front Grant
- Disability Living Allowance Part 2 Mobility
- Ricability
- Shopmobility
- National Key Scheme
- Useful Contacts

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) Part 2 - Mobility

In the last issue we looked at The Care component of the disability living allowance and how the rates of award are decided by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). Now we are going to look at the mobility component.

Mobility component

To be entitled to the mobility component of DLA you must require help with your walking difficulties. There are 2 rates of the mobility component: Higher and Lower .

To qualify for the Higher rate mobility component, you must be aged 3 or over, and your physical or mental condition must be such that:

1. You are unable to walk.
2. you are virtually unable to walk.
3. The exertion of walking would constitute a danger to your life or would be likely or lead to a serious deterioration in your health.
4. you have no legs or feet.
5. your are both deaf and blind.
6. You are entitled to the highest rate of care component and you are severely mentally impaired with disruptive and dangerous behaviour problems.

for tests 1,2 or 3, you must be 'suffering from physical disablement'. But it is accepted that severe learning disabilities can have a physical cause. And you may also qualify.

To qualify for the Lower rate mobility component:

You must be aged 5 or over. It doesn't matter that you are able to walk, "**but you must be so severely disabled physically or mentally that you cannot go out of doors without supervision or guidance from another person most of the time**". This is aimed at people who can walk but cannot go outside unless supervised.

For **Children** to qualify for the lower mobility component, you must show that the child needs substantially more supervision or assistance than a child of the same age in normal physical or mental health.

Qualifying periods:

To qualify for DLA you must satisfy the disability tests 3 months before your claim and for 6 months after your entitlement begins.

Hospital and special accommodation:

The mobility component of DLA is only affected by stays in hospital, it is paid as normal in special accommodation.

What if your situation changes?

If your condition worsens and you already receive DLA, give details of your change in circumstances to the Disability Benefits Unit. Your existing award may be superseded by a higher rate or include a new component. If you do not receive DLA or have been refused, please make a new claim.

If your condition improves and your mobility and care needs decrease, this will mean your rate of DLA will drop. Write to the Disability Benefits Unit with the details. If your condition worsens again within 2 years you can make a linked claim and regain your former rate of DLA.

**If you think you are entitled to DLA,
Free phone The Benefit Enquiry Line on 0800 882200**

They will send you a claim pack and if your claim is successful it will be backdated to the date of the call. If you need help or advice filling in the form or have any questions about DLA and whether you would qualify, please contact DIAL.

Ricability - Research and Information for People with Disabilities

'Ricability is a charity that researches and publishes information on products and services for older people and disabled people.' The reports Ricability produces are free but if you would like to request a publication please send your request with a large (A4) stamped addressed envelope with the relevant postage (depending on the size of the report) to Ricability.

Some of the publications available on mobility are:

- Getting a wheelchair into a car (postage 71p)
- Ins and outs of choosing a car (postage 83p)
- People lifters (postage 58p)
- Wheels within wheels (postage 58p)
- Car Controls (postage 83p)

Other areas Ricability cover include household products, telecoms and alarms.

The publications are also available in Braille, large print and on tape and in pdf format on the Ricability website.

Tel: 0207 427 2460
Text phone: 0207 427 2469
Email: mail@ricability.org.uk
Website: www.ricability.org.uk

Shopmobility

Shopmobility is a registered charity used by 200,000 disabled people a year. There are over 231 schemes all over the country. Manual or powered wheelchairs and powered scooters are available to assist those with mobility problems to use the shops and facilities. Most schemes are free of charge or charge a small fee.

Each Shopmobility scheme varies so it is important to contact the centre you wish to visit, prior to using the service. A member of staff or volunteer will give you all the information you need. Many centres prefer you to book in advance. Most ask that you bring identification containing your name and address on your first visit; this is so that they can complete a registration form and keep a record of your details. Many schemes will issue you with a membership card and on your next visit, you can simply show this card.

Once you have registered, a member of staff will talk to you about what sort of vehicle you require and what you will feel comfortable using.

They will then give you training in handling the vehicles. When you feel confident, and the staff are happy that you are in control of the vehicle - off you go! The whole process takes no longer than 30 minutes maximum and in most cases you will be off in about 15 minutes.

Below are the contact numbers for each of our local schemes. If you want details for schemes in other regions you can use the National Shopmobility website www.justmobility.co.uk or contact the tourist information board nearest to the place you want to visit.

Worcester	01905 610523
Redditch	01527 69922
Birmingham	0121 236 8980
Merry Hill	01384 487911

NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE D.I.A.L.

Registered Charity No. 1053933

Helpline: 0800 970 7202

Office: 01562 60241

Fax: 01562 68248

Email: northworcs.dial@virgin.net

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

We can also refer you to our benefits service which undertakes benefit health checks, form filling and representation at appeals.

Useful Contacts

National Association for Bikers with a Disability
0161 2330122

Disabled Drivers Association **01508 489449**

Disabled Drivers Motor Club Ltd **01832 734724**

Useful Contacts

British Institute of Learning Disabilities
01562 723029

Learn Direct Helpline **0800 100900**

Stroke Association Helpline
0845 3033100

Samaritans Helpline **0845 7909090**

Sexual Health Information Line
0800 567123

Frank National Drug Helpline
0800 776600

Learning Disability Helpline (England)
0808 8081111

Spinal Injuries Association (SIA) Helpline
0800 9800501

Shelter - National Campaign For Homeless People
020 7505 4699

Crossroads - Caring for Carers
01788 573653

National Key Scheme

The National Key Scheme offers independent access to disabled people to around 4,000 locked public toilets around the country. The National Key Scheme (NKS) is suggested only if the provider concerned has to keep the toilets locked to stop vandalism and misuse.

The NKS keys are available from:

RADAR, 12 City Forum, 250 City Rd, London, EC1V 8AF

Tel: 0207 250 3222 **Website:** www.radar.org.uk

RADAR makes no profit in supplying keys, but has to charge VAT for keys. In order to apply zero rate for keys supplied to disabled people, orders must state the name and address of the disabled person with a declaration of disability (e.g. "I am a disabled person and I wish to buy a National Key Scheme Key").

Organisations applying for bulk orders must supply a Zero Rate Certificate.

The NKS RADAR key is available by post for £3.50 Inc p&p.

The NKS Keys are also available from:

Wyre Forest District Council **Tel: 01562 820505 Cost: £3.50**

Bromsgrove District Council **Tel: 01527 873232 Cost: £2.00**

Bridgenorth District Council **Tel: 01746 713100 Cost: £2.00**

Redditch Borough Council **Tel: 01527 64252 Cost: Free**, as long as you are disabled or unemployed

Worcester City Council **Tel: 01905 726311 Cost: £3.75** but Free if you have a Blue Badge