

NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE D.I.A.L.

Registered Charity No. 1053933

THE BULLETIN



Spring Issue
2006

Community
Legal Service



Welcome

Spring has arrived, welcome to this our 8th edition of The Bulletin. We hope that you are finding its contents useful. Please remember that the information provided is included only as a direct response to what our readers ask for. If something is featured it is because people have requested it. So get your thinking caps on, what would you like to find out about? We will do our best to provide it.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to send back their feedback forms for the last edition. 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** or email **admin@nwdial.org.uk**. We look forward to hearing from you and providing you with useful information and contacts.

Connect (Wyre Forest)

Connect (Wyre Forest) is a County Council resource which enables people with a Physical Disability or Sensory Impairment to gain control over their lives.

They provide:

- Information relating to disability (with Dial).
- A safe, accessible building in which people can meet and train.
- A person centred approach which supports people to improve their education, find employment and improve the quality of their social life.
- A Tuesday drop in where people can socialise and make new friends.
- A personal care suite which offers toileting facilities 24 hours a day for use by people who are unable to access conventional toilets for the disabled.

For more information regarding this service please contact:

Connect (Wyre Forest)
10-12 Blackwell Street
Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY10 2DP

Telephone: 01562 829700
Fax: 01562 829963
Email: connectWF@worcestershire.gov.uk



Special points of interest:

- Talking Newspapers & Magazines - National & Local
- New Benefit Rates April 2006
- Useful Contacts

Supported by



TALKING NEWSPAPERS & MAGAZINES - NATIONAL & LOCAL

Whilst a fair number of people have heard of Talking Books, not many folk seem to be aware of the existence of National Talking Newspapers and Magazines, a charity based in Heathfield in East Sussex, which brings Britain's national newspapers and magazines to thousands of people who would otherwise be denied access to this invaluable source of day-to-day information. It is, in effect, the newsagent for blind and partially-sighted people.

An astonishing 230+ publications are read onto tape and audio CD, or converted into an accessible electronic format, by a veritable army of volunteers and staff. And the range of titles dealt with by National Talking Newspapers and Magazines is bewildering and covers just about every topic or subject of interest that you might think of. Apart from the daily papers, which are dealt with as a weekly digest on analogue tape and audio CD, but are issued in full day by day electronically, you will find such publications as The Economist, Spectator, Woman's Own, New Civil Engineer, Private Eye, all the BBC magazines, Take a Break, Radio Times, Flight International, Classic Bus – the list goes on and on.

The value of this incredible service is demonstrated by the users themselves. The word 'lifeline' crops up again and again. So many people who lose their sight experience a terrible sense of isolation. Understandably, they feel cut off from everything around them. However, access to news of what is going on in the world, or information regarding their particular interests or hobbies, helps to break down these barriers. Our subscribers often write in to say that they can now instigate conversations based on information they had "read" (their word) in the papers. And it is not simply the fact that news is delivered to the recipients that is important – the way it is delivered is also crucial for the readers become like old friends. Hearing the news read by familiar voices is comforting and reassuring. It makes the service warm and feeling; it makes it human.

Inevitably, there will be some delay in getting the news out to people on recorded tape and audio CD. The information has to be obtained, then selected (only 90 minutes worth will fit on to a cassette, 80 minutes for an audio CD), recorded, checked, copied, packed and dispatched. This might be satisfactory if a monthly, or even a weekly, magazine is involved as much of the content will not be too time sensitive. However, where daily papers are concerned, even a modest delay makes a huge difference. Nobody wants to read yesterday's news. This is where new technology comes into play. There is no question that the digital revolution, whilst it might still unnerve some people from the pre-computer generation, has proven a boon for visually-impaired people and others with disabilities preventing access to the printed word. With the advent of e-mail, computers, screen-readers and voice synthesizers, it is now possible to speed the delivery of much of the news to the extent that the position has now been reached whereby blind and partially-sighted people can actually receive and browse their daily paper – all of it, not just selected extracts - QUICKER than sighted readers!

And the journey of discovery goes on. Already work is well under way to develop new delivery systems, including MP3 and digital streaming.

However, this unique and invaluable service remains shrouded in secrecy for thousands of people who, if only they knew about it, would gain the same sense of enjoyment and fulfillment as existing subscribers.

CONTINUE

It is not expensive – just £30 would get you a whole year's subscription to two monthly publications and one weekly title.

£40 would give you access to the complete electronic catalogue.

Ironically, those who could benefit from this service will not have been able to read this article. So, it is now up to you to give a few minutes' thought as to who you know who might like to sign up to National Talking Newspapers and Magazines - or, better still, why not prove a real pal and treat them to a year's subscription!

For more information about the service contact **01435 866102**, email: info@tnauk.org.uk or view the website: www.tnauk.org.uk

BROMSGROVE TALKING NEWSPAPER

Mrs. M.E. Brown
53 Old Station Road
Bromsgrove B60 2AE
Tel: 01527 874112

They record the Bromsgrove Evening Mail, Bromsgrove Advert, Bromsgrove Standard, Church Magazines, Interviews, Saga, and the W.I. News.

REDDITCH TALKING NEWSPAPER

Mrs M. Mountford
Community House
103 Easemore House
Redditch, B98 8EY
Tel: 01527 451292

Email: mmountford@blueyonder.co.uk

They record the Redditch Advertiser, Redditch Standard and the Redditch Indicator.

WYRE FOREST TALKING NEWSPAPER

Mrs. B. Smith
9 Nursery Grove
Kidderminster DY11 5BG
Tel: 01562 751980

They record the Kidderminster Shuttle, Kidderminster Times and the Stourport News.

If you required an Audio Copy of "The Bulletin" please contact Dial.



Useful Contacts

Disability Living Allowance / Attendance Allowance Helpline 08457 123456

Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL) 0800 88 22 00

Worcestershire Carer's Unit 0800 3892896

Mencap Learning Disability Helpline
0808 8081111

Blue Badge Offices:

Wyre Forest Customer Service Centre
01562 732928

Bromsgrove District Customer Service Centre
01527 881288

Redditch One Stop Shop 01527 534123

Pension Credit 0800 99 1234

Social Services 0845 6072000
Out of hours emergency number 01905 768020

Community Legal Service Direct
0845 3454345

Dial-A-Ride

Wyre Forest 01562 755084

Redditch 01527 64910

WRVS Bromsgrove Rural Rides
01527 67771

Mini Bus for the elderly 01527 872507

New Benefit Rates April 2006

Attendance Allowance (AA)

High Rate £62.25

Low Rate £41.65

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

Care Component

Higher £62.25

Middle £41.65

Lower £16.50

Mobility Component

Higher £43.45

Lower £16.50

Carer's Allowance (CA) £46.95

Incapacity Benefit (IB)

Long-term IB £ 78.50

Short-term IB under state pension age

High Rate £70.05

Low Rate £59.20

Short-term IB over state pension age

High Rate £78.50

Low Rate £75.35

All rates are weekly

NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE D.I.A.L.

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 help with form filling.

Helpline: 0800 970 7202

Fax & Minicom : 01562 68248

Office: 01562 60241

Email: admin@nwdial.org.uk

Website: www.nwdial.org.uk

North Worcestershire



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