

WEST BERKSHIRE DISABILITY ALLIANCE (WBDA) NEWSLETTER

March 2006, Edition 5

Website: www.wbda.org

Charity No. 1108112

Successful Grant Bid

The WBDA has secured funding from 'Awards for All' to allow the organisation to purchase state of the art audio equipment to enable people with a hearing impairment to participate fully in its meetings, debates and forums. This equipment when purchased will be loaned free of charge to affiliated and member groups and organisations of the WBDA to help them meet their duty under the Disability Discrimination Act.

Looking for Disability Info?

Then you need to log onto:

www.diwb.org

'We believe it's the best around!'

Readibus in and around Newbury

Readibus is a door to door bus service that is fully wheelchair accessible, with services running in & around Newbury, and onto Thatcham and Reading. It's currently available Monday to Friday and every third Saturday. To book (up to one week in advance) or for further information Tel: 0118 931 0000.

Support Officer Required

Newbury & District MS Society is looking for a volunteer to take over the MS Support Officer role, approx 10 hours a week. Knowledge of what it is like living with MS would be helpful, but flexibility and a sense of humour are essential! The role requires criminal records clearance. Phone John on 01635 33582.

Direct Payments

The West Berkshire Direct Payment Service is holding a conference at Newbury Rugby Club on 11 May 2006. The conference is for Community Care Direct Payment (CCDP) users, prospective CCDP users and professionals who are interested in understanding more about CCDP and how they can be used. More info - Contact Pam Champion Tel: 0118 9419183, Fax: 0118 9419182, or Email:

Newbury Handybus - Want to go shopping ?

A team of dedicated volunteers provide weekly shopping trips for people unable to use public transport. We pick up from all parts of the town and for those people who use a wheelchair or can not make the steps the buses have a platform lift. Shopping trips cost around £2.50 and you can pay using your bus tokens or using your half price bus pass. The door to door service can be accessed by calling Brian Mawson on 01635 37111

Rail Travel

The WBDA is currently undertaking its own audit of the railway stations serving West Berkshire with a view to recommend a series of improvements to First Group re: access for disabled people. Issues that are likely to be of high priority are:

- ◆ Wheelchair access to the footbridge on Newbury Station
- ◆ General access to Theale station
- ◆ Assistance at un-manned stations
- ◆ Parking

Access to the Countryside

On Monday, 3rd April 2006, the WBDA will be holding its first Disability Forum of the year at the Thatcham Nature Discovery Centre. The forum will act as the official launch of the WBDA & West Berkshire Council 'Access to the Countryside' initiative, a project that will be ongoing and aim to improve access to beauty spots, footpaths, places of interest and other sites throughout the countryside of West Berkshire to enable disabled people to enjoy the many areas of outstanding natural beauty we are fortunate to have inherited. The Forum will aim to set out how the two organisations intend to work together in an effort to tackle this issue, as well as highlighting places that can already be accessed. For more information on this event call Mick on 01635 49701 or Shelly on 01635 523861.

REACT

The REACT project, which helps sight impaired people navigate around town centres via a series of speakers sited on buildings, lampposts, etc, has now officially come under the umbrella of the WBDA, which will provide the project with admin & logistical support, as well as banking facilities. Hopefully with this support the REACT Committee will be able to complete the fantastic work it has begun in Newbury and roll out the project into other areas of West Berkshire.

Chip & Pin

As you are probably aware, from 14/02/06 you are no longer able to sign for credit or debit card transactions unless you have made provision to your bank or card company for them to supply you with a 'Chip & Signature' card. As the WBDA understands it, you should still be able to apply for such a card, however if you are experiencing problems with this or the Chip & Pin system as a whole, we would like to hear from you.

Support Worker

The WBDA is pleased to announce that the organisation now has a Support Worker, Shelly Hambrecht, funded through the offices of Community Action West Berkshire. Shelly can be contacted on: 01635 523861 or by email: shellyhambrecht@wbda.org

WBDA Diary - 2006

Monday, 3rd April 2006

Disability Forum

'Access to the Countryside'

18.45 hrs – 20.30 hrs

Nature Discovery Centre,
Thatcham

Monday, 15th May 2006

WBDA Open Meeting

18.45 hrs – 20.45 hrs

Greenfield House, Calcot

Monday, 17th July 2006

WBDA AGM

18.45 hrs – 20.30 hrs

United Reform Church Room,
Newbury

Monday, 4th Sept 2006

WBDA Open Meeting

18.45 hrs – 20.45hrs

(Venue TBA)

Monday, 2nd Oct 2006

Disability Forum

18.45hrs – 20.30hrs

(Venue TBA)

WBDA Contact Details:

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This newsletter has a distribution list of 1200. If you or your organisation would like to sponsor an edition of this newsletter, please contact Mick at the WBDA.