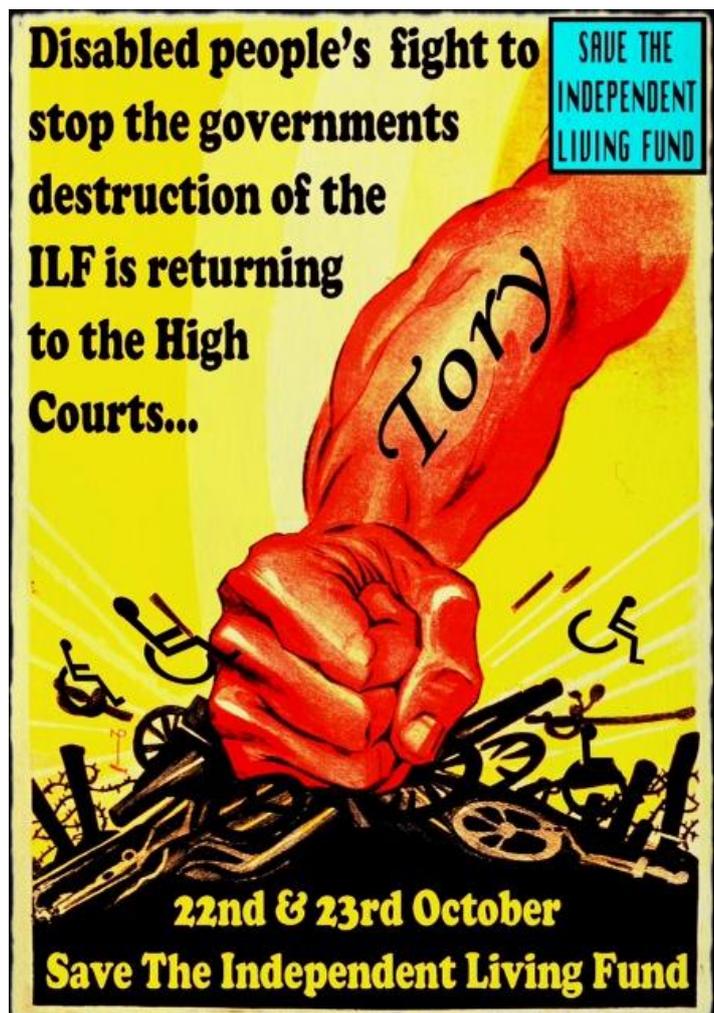


Information Bulletin October 2014

Don't Forget! Save the ILF Campaign

It is important for us to continue putting pressure on our MPs to reverse the decision to close the Independent Living Fund next year.

With a general election on its way, we cannot let this issue be drowned out by all the other lobbying of MPs and potential MPs which will be taking place over the next few months.



For more information about how you can take part in the campaign, contact GMCDP or go to the Save The ILF page on the GMCDP website: www.gmcdp.com/save-the-ilf and keep a watch on the Disabled People Against Cuts website: www.dpac.uk.net

Challenge to Closure of Independent Living Fund

This second challenge, against the Department of Work and Pensions, will take place at the Royal Courts of Justice on 22 and 23 October.



Disabled People Against Cuts are organising a vigil outside the Court from 12.30 on 22 October, to support the Independent Living Fund recipients taking the challenge to court.

To find out more, including links to background information, go to the Disabled People Against Cuts webpage: <http://ow.ly/Ckao8>

DRUK Raises Concerns over ILF Transition Fund

Disability Rights UK (DRUK) has made a Freedom of Information request, asking local authorities their plans regarding the Independent



Living Fund transition money. This is money the government is handing over to local authorities for the first year after the Independent Living Fund is closed.

DRUK asked, firstly, whether the funding would be ring-fenced to support ex-ILF recipients, and secondly, whether the transition fund would be ring-fenced within the social care budget.

Of those who responded, only 10 local authorities said they have plans to ring-fence the money for ex-ILF recipients, and a further 10 said they would ring-fence the money to their social care budget.

For details, go to the DRUK webpage:
<http://ow.ly/CmGz1>

New Short Film about ILF

Kate Belgrave has produced a short film about the fight for the Independent Living Fund (ILF) in conjunction with False Economy, Ros Wynne Jones (of the Daily Mirror), Disabled People Against Cuts (DPAC) and Moore Leven Films.

For more information and to see the film, go to the DPAC webpage: <http://ow.ly/CkjCj>

‘Everyday Disablism’ Wants Your Experiences

This website is calling for disabled people to share their experiences of ‘disabling encounters’.



The website asks: “... what happened? What sense were you able to make of what happened? What impact did it have on you going forward? The more we talk about these things, the better prepared we’ll be to understand and challenge them when they happen in future.”

Disabled activists Dr Colin Cameron, Maggie Cameron and Andy Fletcher have set up this website. They were inspired by the Everyday Sexism project developed by Laura Bates.

You can find the website at:
<http://everydaydisablism.com>

Poor Access to UK Tourist Attractions

The charity, Vitalise, has surveyed the physical accessibility of UK tourist attractions on the top 100 most popular list. Only 52 responded, and of those, 63% were not fully wheelchair accessible; with 25% not having fully accessible approaches to their door. In addition, only 26% had information about accessibility on their website.

For more detail, go to the BBC news webpage:
www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-28804914

Proposal to Cut Long-Distance Train Routes

An article in the Private Eye magazine has highlighted a Department of Transport proposal to reduce the number of long-distance train routes, for example, the East Midlands route Norwich to Liverpool, which it is proposed would break at Nottingham.



This would have a significant impact on disabled and older people, because it would lead to more train changes.

As many disabled people are aware, although there have been great improvements in accessibility on the rail network, including infrastructure and staffing, train changes can often go wrong.

The reasoning behind these changes is to make the administration of rail franchises easier and more cost effective, not to improve services for passengers.

Thanks to Tony Baldwinson, GMCDP has a PDF copy of the article. Contact the office if you would like us to send it to you.

New Travel Guide

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has produced a new passport-sized travel guide. It explains what facilities should be available to disabled passengers according to the law; and what services are available for disabled and mobility impaired passengers from travel companies, airports and airlines.

To download the booklet, plus another EHRC booklet about disabled people's rights when flying, go to the webpage:
<http://ow.ly/CkkBY>

You can also order standard print and other formats of the booklets on the EHRC webpage:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/order-publications>

Phone 0161 829 8100; email correspondence@equalityhumanrights.com or write to Correspondence Unit, Arndale House, The Arndale Centre, Manchester M4 3AQ

Salford Forced to Keep Transport for Disabled People

Salford City Council has been trying to cut transport to day centres for disabled people in the city. Irwin Mitchell solicitors supported a disabled man to take the Council to the High Court in Manchester to stop this. The Council agreed it would not cut the service while a judicial review is being sought.

For more information, go to the Salford Star webpage: <http://ow.ly/CmH6K>

Party Conference Season Disappointments

Disabled people have not fared too well in the 2014 party conference season.

At the Labour Party Conference, Bernadette Horton claimed she and two other disabled delegates were moved from their reserved seats at the front of the hall before Ed Miliband's speech. Ms Horton told an Independent newspaper journalist they were the seats

Ed Miliband walked past after his speech, and they were filled with 'bright young things', who Miliband shook hands with on his way past. (<http://ow.ly/CkmKk>)

While, at the Conservative Party Conference, more cuts to working-age benefits have been announced. These will, of course, affect a lot of disabled people, as well as non-disabled people. The Mirror newspaper has an article in which it shares the views of Mary Laver, a disabled life-long Conservative supporter who is struggling to continue supporting the party. (<http://ow.ly/Cko48>)



Guidance on New Lobbying Rules

Many voluntary sector organisations, including disabled people's groups, are starting to plan campaigns in the run up to the general election next year.

The new Lobbying Act has added a complication to the planning process, by introducing rules for non-party campaigners. These include some restrictions to the amount of money which can be spent on campaigning; and who is defined as the general public and regular contributors of organisations.

The Electoral Commission has produced guidance for the Lobbying Act, and Elizabeth Chamberlain of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) has written a summary of the rules for non-party campaigners with links to the full guidance.

Find the NCVO summary at: <http://ow.ly/Ckqjhj>
Find the full Electoral Commission guidance at:
<http://ow.ly/CkqlE>

National Database of ‘Disabled People’s User Led Organisations’

The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) is developing a national database of Disabled People’s User Led Organisations (DPULOs).

The Office for Disability Issues’ definition of a DPULO is taken from their Facilitation Fund Programme.

DPULOs:

- Are led and controlled by disabled people and have a minimum membership of 75% of disabled people on their board
- Actively demonstrate their commitment to disabled people by employing disabled staff and volunteers
- Actively demonstrate their commitment to the Social Model of Disability
- The Facilitation Fund will also consider those organisations which can demonstrate they are working to achieve the above definition.

You can find the database on the gov.uk webpage:
<http://ow.ly/Ckqxs>

New Health and Work Service Coming Soon

This new government initiative is intended to 'help' disabled people and people with long term health conditions to stay in, or gain, employment.



When an employee has reached, or is expected to reach, 4 weeks on sick leave, Their GP will make a referral to the service.

An occupational health professional will then assess the person to identify why they are not returning to work. This will include looking at reasons other than health. The employee will receive a return to work plan, with recommendations of where to get support and advice, and how to return to work more quickly.

There will also be a telephone line and website which employers, employees and GPs can use to find information.

For more information from the government website, go to: <http://ow.ly/Ckr4l>

There is a commentary about the Service on the Disabled People Against Cuts webpage: <http://ow.ly/CkrU7>

How to Confirm DWP Has Your 'Fit Note'

If you put your mobile phone number on the top right-hand side of your 'Fit Note', the Department of Work and Pensions will send you a text to confirm they have received the note and when you can expect payment.

Please note, it takes 7 days for the DWP to receive documents. This information came from the Disability Rights UK website: www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Jobseeker Sanction Advice – New Website

A group of ex-Department of Work and Pensions staff has set up this new website, which gives advice on Jobseeker's Allowance sanctions.

The group offer to:

- Research your situation and sanction, to establish if it is legal.
- If possible, attend a tribunal to overturn an unfair Jobseeker's Agreement or benefit sanction.
- Speak to the local DWP office on your behalf.
- If you wish, deal with your local MP.
- Give general benefits advice such as expense claims.

All information is treated confidentially. To contact the team, use the contact form on their website:
<http://jobseekersanctionadvice.com>

Guidance for Benefit Claims

The Benefits and Work website offers written guidelines, hints and tips for completing application forms, assessment and appeals process involved in claiming Employment and Support Allowance, Personal Independence Payment and Disability Living Allowance.

Limited information is available without charge. GMCDP has a professional subscription to the website, and can send you any of the guidance material either electronically in PDF or printed out in standard print. Contact details for GMCDP on the back page of this bulletin. The Benefits and Work website is at: www.benefitsandwork.co.uk

New Memorial to Disabled People Killed By The Nazis

Early in September a memorial was unveiled outside the Berlin Philharmonic Building. The blue glass wall commemorates the 300,000 disabled people killed as part of the T4 programme during the Second World War. For more information, there are several sources:

An article about the memorial in the Jewish Times:
<http://ow.ly/Ckt25>

A BBC news article about the memorial at:
<http://ow.ly/Ckt5L>

For information about the Holocaust and disabled people, go to the 2009 BBC Ouch web page:
<http://ow.ly/Ckt9c>

Euthanasia and Assisted Dying: Lessons from Belgium

This one-day international conference is on Saturday 1 November, from 9:30am–4:30pm, at St Mary's University, Twickenham.



The conference will examine the experience of 'physician assisted death' in Belgium, and what lessons can be applied to discussions and decisions in this country.

The conference has been organised by the Anscombe Bioethics Centre in cooperation with KU Leuven, the Scottish Council for Human Bioethics, and the Centre for Bioethics and Emerging Technologies at St Mary's University. The Anscombe Bioethics Centre is a member of Care Not Killing.

Cost of the conference is £20 concessions, £45 full cost. For more information, contact Gwen McCourt on 01865 610 212; via admin@bioethics.org.uk or on the Anscombe Bioethics Centre webpage: <http://ow.ly/Ckuwy>

Survey about Bipolar Disorder

This online survey has been launched to gather material which will guide future research into Bipolar Disorder. The survey is the first asking for the views of people who experience Bipolar Disorder themselves, as well as families, friends and professionals.

For more information, go to:
<http://www.lindalliance.org/Bipolar.asp>

SAFE – Salford Autism Friendly Environment

The goals of this newly established user-led group are:



- To provide a support network, working in partnership with Salford City council and external agencies.
- To encourage the goodwill and involvement of the wider Autism community. To foster community spirit and encourage civic pride
- To promote positive images and ethos and work towards breaking down barriers and or stigma re: Autism.

Regular Meetings will be at Eccles Town Hall on the 1st Thursday in each month from 12:00 – 3:00pm. There will be 'coffee and light bites' in the Training Room.

SAFE also offers confidential signposting support for individuals and families who have not found a comfortable answer elsewhere to their questions or to their needs.

Find out more about SAFE by phone on 0161 408 8040; via email Salford.SAFE.2014@gmail.com or on their webpage: <http://ow.ly/CkvF9>

National Women's Self Injury Helpline

This UK-wide Women's Self Injury Helpline is now open on Wednesdays from 7-9pm and Thursdays from 3-5pm. You can call for confidential, non-judgmental emotional support around self injury.

Phone 0808 800 8088. All volunteers are female and have received specialist training.

Text and Email Support Service for Girls and Young Women Up To 24, Who Self-Injure

TESS is open Monday to Friday, 7pm-9pm
Text 0780 047 2908 or use the email contact form on the webpage:
www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk/tessform

TESS says:

“If you don't know how to start talking, just text or email 'hello'.”

TESS reply to all messages. The aim is to text back within half an hour and to email within 24 hours during

opening times. If the service is very busy and cannot reply the same day, you will receive an auto message letting you know.

New Stroke Information / Support Group

Stroke Information is a new group set up by 4 people who have experienced strokes. The aim is to provide information and support to people who have had a stroke, their families and supporters.

The group is initially working with people throughout Greater Manchester but hopes to extend its range as it develops.

For more information, contact John by mobile on 07850 605 236 and email John@strokeinformation.co.uk or Nick by mobile on 07950 286417 and email Nick@strokeinformation.co.uk.

Or go to the website: www.strokeinformation.co.uk

New Epilepsy Support Group in Stockport

A new group is starting in Stockport, which aims to inform people where to get help, support, or just an informal chat with someone who understands epilepsy. The first meeting was on 30 September at Disability Stockport.

For information, phone 0161 480 7248; write Disability Stockport, 23 High Street, Stockport. SK1 1EG

Accentuate History of Place - A New Disability History Initiative

Accentuate History of Place is a social history programme creating a national picture of buildings (or 'built heritage') linked with, and relevant to, disabled people. It will encompass local projects recording disabled people's lives from the middle ages to the late 20th century.

The project aims to highlight historic sites, from early provision for disabled people to the first examples of purpose-built architecture. Local people across the country will be able to take part in workshops looking at archive material relating to the sites. There will also be a national touring exhibition and website resource.

To find out more, go to the Accentuate website www.accentuateuk.org click on projects then Accentuate Heritage. Or email info@accentuateuk.org; phone 01303 259777; write to Accentuate, c/o Screen South, The Wedge, 75-81 Tontine street, Folkestone. CT20 1JR



National Disability Arts Collection and Archive

In July, it was announced that the amount of match funding needed to establish the National Disability Arts Collection and Archive (NDACA) has almost been

reached. Alongside the work being put into finding funding, the project's archivist, Alex Cowan, is progressing with a Content & Condition survey.

To keep a watch on developments, go to:
<http://www.ndaca.org.uk>

The 'Accessible Britain Challenge'

This initiative was launched on 4 September. Through it the government, "wants to encourage communities to become more inclusive and accessible." The initiative is aimed at local business and councils, voluntary/community organisations and disabled people's organisations.

You can find out more, including links to guidance, good practice examples and toolkits on the webpage:
www.gov.uk/accessiblebritain

You can email fulfilling.potential@dwp.gsi.gov.uk or write to: The Accessible Britain Challenge, Ground Floor, Caxton House, 6-12 Tothill Street, London SW1H 9NA.

Anti-Bullying Week 2014

The theme of anti-bullying week this year is 'Let's stop bullying for all.' The week runs from 17 – 21 November.



Disability History Month are producing a resource for this week focussing on bullying of young disabled people, which will be on their website:
www.ukdisabilitymonth.com

For more information about anti bullying week, go to:
www.antibullyingweek.co.uk

There is advice for parents of disabled children being bullied on the Bullying UK webpage:
<http://ow.ly/CkxFp>
plus a helpline by email via the contact form on the website or phone 0808 800 2222.

DaDaFest International 2014 on its Way

From 8 November 2014 to 11 January 2015, Liverpool is once again hosting this bi-annual celebration of Deaf and Disability Artists.

This year's programme will include:

- Art of the Lived Experiment exhibition at the Bluecoat
- a celebration of Unsung radical – Edward Rushton,
- a weekend of activities for young people
- performances from Laurence Clark, Staff Benda Bilili, Krip-Hop Nation, Sophie Partridge and many more.

For more detail, go to the website: www.dadafest.co.uk
or email info@dadafest.co.uk phone_0151 707 1733
mobile 07436 536 200 or write to DaDaFest, the Bluecoat, School Lane, Liverpool, L1 3B.

Disability History Month 2014

It isn't too soon to start planning events for this year's Disability History Month, which will be launched on 19 November in London.

The theme for this year is:
'War and Impairment: The Social Consequences of Disablement'

For more information, go to the Disability History Month website: www.dhm.org.uk

3 December - International Day of Disabled People

The United Nations has set a theme for this year's International Day of Persons with Disabilities (its official title) as: 'Sustainable development: the promise of technology'.

You can find the United Nations webpage at:
<http://ow.ly/Cmltw>

'Disabled Access Day' – 17 January 2015

This is a new initiative being organised and promoted by a group of disabled people and their family/friends in Scotland. The group includes the website Euan's Guide, which displays people's comments about the accessibility of places and venues.

**DISABLED
ACCESS DAY**

17th January 2015

The organisers are suggesting that, on this day, all disabled people should go somewhere they have not been before. There are ideas for how both individuals and venues can get involved in this day on the website.

For more information, go to the Disabled Access Day website:

<http://disabledaccessday.com>

Get Involved In 2015 – Disabled People and 3D Printing

Disability Rights UK has teamed up with academics from Salford and Dundee universities for the 'In the Making' Project.

The research, starting in January 2015, will consider how disabled people can use the new 3D printing (fabrication) technology to produce items for themselves, as entrepreneurs and political activists. The project will map the current use of digital fabrication technology by disabled people. Then mobile digital fabrication will be taken to disabled people in community and other venues around Greater Manchester. Digital fabrication experts and artists will support disabled people to make both useful and creative 3-D items with this technology. The final stage will be an exhibition of creations at Salford University Media City.

For more detail, go to the Disability Rights UK webpage: <http://ow.ly/CmISS>

GMCDP and ‘Creating Our Future Histories’

GMCDP is taking part in this exciting project being run by Manchester Metropolitan University. It is an opportunity to work with two young researchers to produce an exhibition celebrating GMCDP’s history and looking forward to GMCDP’s future.



The timing of this work is perfect, as GMCDP celebrates the 30th anniversary of its inaugural meeting in June 2015.

Caron, GMCDP Manager, and Linda, GMCDP Information Worker, are the lead contacts for the project. Emma and Ian, the researchers working with us, are very enthusiastic and have already started looking at old GMCDP documents to create a chronology of GMCDP as a base for working towards the exhibition. Emma and Ian also hope to interview founder and established members of GMCDP, and young people just starting to become involved.

As well as other voluntary sector groups taking part, this is an opportunity to make links with the People’s History Museum, Heritage Lottery Fund and the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement.

Knowledge and skills will be shared through the project. We anticipate that, as well as gaining an

exhibition, GMCDP members, and disabled people around Greater Manchester, will also gain new insight into our past and an enthusiasm to be closely involved in GMCDP's future.

The Creating Future Histories webpage, including blogs from participants, is:
www.futurehistories.mmu.ac.uk

We Need Your Stories!

To celebrate GMCDP's 30th anniversary next year, Martin Pagel is producing a book telling the story of GMCDP by looking at the changes GMCDP has made in people's lives.



Martin is interested in the influence GMCDP has had on all areas of people's lives, but particular themes may be: access, independence, employment, training, personal development, peer support, relationships ... sex, drugs and rock and roll!

Please send us your story of how your involvement in or contact with GMCDP has supported you to gain a better quality of life, in whatever way, whether large or small. Your contribution can be anonymous in the book if you prefer.

You can share by sending us photos, stories, poems, or other ways which capture what you would like to say.

We would like people who have been members, workers, trainers, trainees, partners, allies, friends, and even opponents and antagonists to share memories and anecdotes.

The book will capture the difference to people, organisations, society and the world so it is important that we hear from people who have been involved for 3 days, 3 months, 3 years or 30 years.

The book will complement the Creating Future Histories project which GMCDP is involved in, and proposed National Archive.



‘Working With MS’ Meeting in Tameside

On Wednesday 29 October, the group MS Tameside is holding a meeting to explore some of the issues facing people living with MS. Elaine Astley, from Breakthrough UK, will be speaking about issues relating to employment.

The meeting is being held at Ashton Village Urban Resort Pamir Drive, Ashton-under-Lyne, Tameside OL7 0LY from 7pm to 9.30pm.

For more information, contact the Tameside and Glossop branch on 07876 155307 or at jeffsueedwards252@btinternet.com

Changes to Disabled Students' Allowance Deferred

In the last Information Bulletin GMCDP reported changes in the Disabled Students' Allowance which will mean disabled students will no longer be entitled to some of the support they have been used to receiving.

In a written statement released on 12 September, the Minister for Universities and Science, Greg Clarke, announced that changes to Disabled Students' Allowance are to be deferred until the academic year beginning in 2016.

This is to give more time for universities to be prepared for their responsibilities in terms of making courses and facilities more accessible to disabled students.

Campaign for Fairer Pre-Payment Meters

Citizens' Advice has launched a campaign to lobby energy companies. They are calling for customers using pre-payment meters to receive a fairer service. These are meters which some people, usually those with the least income, use to pay for energy.

The campaign is highlighting that there are only limited places to buy or top-up the prepayment cards for the meters, and that energy costs more using these meters than payment by direct debit.



To see the petition, go to:
<http://ow.ly/CFf9R>

Who Benefits?

The latest statistics reported by the Who Benefits? Campaign show that people receiving benefits are affected by the general public's attitude to benefit recipients.

The report highlights that:

“A total of 16 per cent said a landlord or letting agent had refused to let them rent a property and 18 per cent said they'd been treated less favourably by a potential employer or had difficulty accessing a bank account or financial services because they were claiming benefits.”

And

“38 per cent of people supported by benefits said they worried that the public thought negatively about them, and that their self-esteem was affected as a result. 31 per cent said worrying about public perceptions was impacting on their mental health. Self-esteem,

confidence and mental health are all key factors in helping people to get back on their feet and on with their lives.”

For more information, go to:
<http://blog.whobenefits.org.uk>



Young Men’s Group and Young Women’s Group

GMCDP is holding monthly meetings for young disabled people living in Manchester, aged 15 – 25 years.

The young disabled women’s group is on the first Saturday of each month and the young disabled men’s group is on the second Saturday of each month.

To find out more about the young women’s group, contact Maureen or Katie by phone: 0161 636 7538 or email mday@gmcdp.com and kcragg@gmcdp.com

To find out more about the young men’s group, contact Phil or Brett by phone on 0161 636 7538 or email psamphire@gmcdp.com and bsavage@gmcdp.com.

GMCDP will support with access requirements for these meetings.

Don't forget to check the GMCDP website for regularly updated news and information!

www.gmcdp.com/pages

Next Information Bulletin

Please send any news or events by 14 November 2014.

If you need assistance to access any of the websites or information given in this bulletin, please contact the GMCDP office.

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Phone: 0161 636 7534
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