

News from Horsham District Council for disabled people in the Horsham District

**W**elcome to the latest Disability Newsletter produced by Horsham District Council for local disabled people.

In this edition we have had contributions from West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service as well as Disablism Hate Crime and improvements to Warnham Nature Reserve.

Positive feedback has been received about the first two editions and also comments on how to improve its accessibility which we hope will be shown in this edition.

Any comments are gratefully received. Please contact the Access Officer by any means outlined opposite.

## Improving Access to Shops and Businesses



Following on from the news article in the last Chronicle about improving accessibility to various venues in Horsham Town, more feedback cards have been sent in from local disabled people. This has led to the Access Officer giving advice to local businesses on how they can improve access to their venues. Please send in (or request) more cards of any issues you may have or good examples of best practice.

In addition, the [www.accesshorsham.co.uk](http://www.accesshorsham.co.uk) website will have basic information on the accessibility of the businesses in the Horsham Town as well as the feedback template and a "Top 10 tips" list for local businesses on improving access.

### Inside this issue . . .

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If you require this document in an alternative format or want to give feedback contact: The Access Officer on 01403 215648 (Typetalk calls welcome)

# National News

## What's the issue?

4 million people in the UK are losing their hearing but doing nothing about it. Research suggests this is because of embarrassment, but unfortunately a hearing loss at any age can have a huge impact on personal, social and working lives if it is not addressed.

Many people wait up to 15 years between the onset of hearing loss and seeking advice about it. However it can be better to find out about hearing aids sooner rather than later as getting used to amplified sound is harder if you have already got used to a 'quieter world'.

## What is RNID doing about it?

Since December 2005 over 370,000 people have called 0845 600 5555 (local rates apply) to check their hearing. The hearing check is a quick and easy way for people to take immediate action to address a potential hearing problem.

For more information on issues related to deafness contact RNID on [www.rnid.org.uk](http://www.rnid.org.uk) or call the helpline on 020 7296 8000

## Treading the boards!



Following on from feedback from local disabled residents, a request was made to improve the accessibility from the car park at Warnham Nature Reserve to allow level and easy access to the board walks which go around the lake. The path improvement has been a bonus for the wildlife too, as the path leaves more room for plants to grow (such as bluebells, greater stitchwort and irises)

and for animals such as great crested grebes, herons and greylag geese to come out of the water without being in too close proximity to humans.

## Computer Problems?



**The ITCH (Information Technology Can Help) network can we help you?**

The aim of ITCH is similar to the AA or the RAC, and can offer assistance in the form of computer assistance to individuals with disabilities.

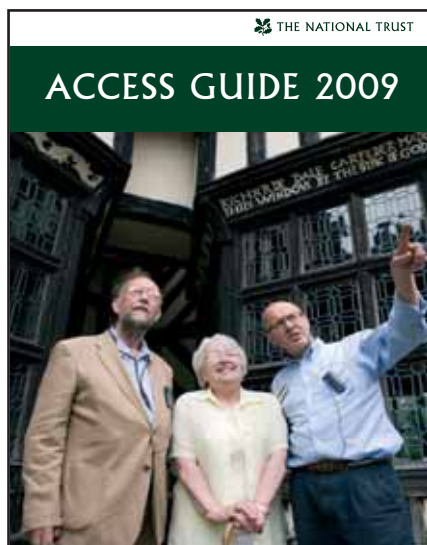
ITCH can help you in the following ways:

- provide impartial advice on computer hardware and software
- install new equipment and software
- help you get connected to the Internet and use e-mail
- get you started with standard packages such as word processing
- solve technical problems that may arise
- give advice and assistance with hardware and software upgrades
- help you to get the most out of your computer and software

For further details contact 0800 269545 and ask for the local ITCH volunteer [www.itcanhelp.org.uk/](http://www.itcanhelp.org.uk/)

## National Trust Access Guide

Following on from travel theme in last newsletter



The National Trust produces a free book each year, *Access Guide*, which gives details of the access provisions at our properties. Examples of information found in the guide include parking provisions, transfer vehicles, and powered vehicles for loan, inductions loops, and ramps.

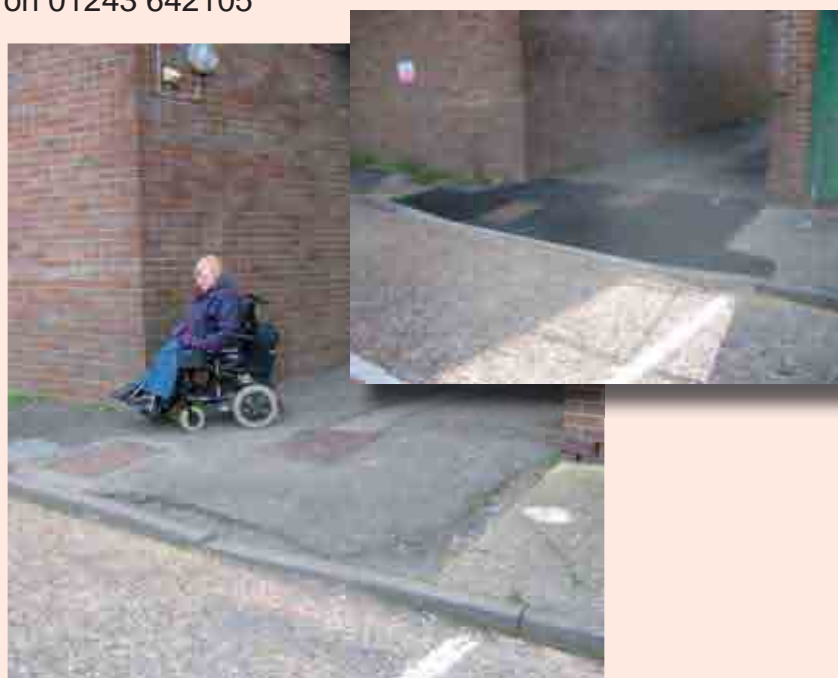
The guide also gives information regarding their admission policy, where the necessary companion of a disabled visitor goes into our properties free, while the normal membership or admission fee still applies to the disabled person. In these circumstances we can issue an Admit One Card

To obtain an Access Guide or to request an Admit One Card please contact the Access for All Office, on 01793 817634 or e-mail [accessforall@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:accessforall@nationaltrust.org.uk).

## Jengers Mead path improvement in Billingshurst

Sue Carter, a wheelchair user from Billingshurst reported a problem with a path that was making access from her home to the local parade of shops difficult.

She contacted the Access Officer who was able to find out who was responsible for the path and see if there was some way in which it could be improved. The photos below show the before and after pictures. If you have any issues with the state of the pavement (there is a good chance it is a pavement that belongs to the Highways Department of West Sussex County Council) get in touch with the hotline on 01243 642105



## Ask Des - Disability Equipment for Sale



Ask DES is run in West Sussex by the West Sussex Association for Disabled People (WSAD). To place an advertisement to buy and sell equipment all you need to do is

Phone 01903 244 457 or go to [www.askdes.org.uk](http://www.askdes.org.uk)

All adverts are free if the item is under £100, any price over £100 is £10 for a year.

# Free Fire Safety Checks

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service  
**Community Fire Safety**

Home Fire Safety Check  
and Free Smoke Alarm



For this free service from  
your local Firefighters,  
ring the free phone number below

**Free Phone**  
**0800 3286487**



West  
Sussex  
Fire & Rescue  
Service

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (WSFRS) are able to offer a home fire safety check free of charge, and if needed (WSFRS) will fit 10 year smoke detection again at no charge.

Their Home Fire Safety check comprises of Four elements:

**Prevention:** WSFRS will discuss with the occupier Kitchen safety, electrical appliances, open fires, candles and smoking materials

**Detection:** The fitting of smoke detection, total alarms fitted dependent on type of property, all WSFRS alarms have a 10 year fixed batteries.

**Escape Plans:** Escape plans are very important, and if you already have a planned route in the event of a fire and know what to do, we also advise if someone is bed ridden or disabled.

**Night time routines:** Advising on the importance of switching off electrical appliances before going to bed and closing doors to prevent the spread of fire.

Home fire safety check is not just about fitting the alarms it includes reminders on maintaining and testing the alarms regularly, educating people on what to do in the event of a fire and how to avoid fire occurring by a few simple actions.

For deaf people, alarms consisting of a Strobe light and pillow shaker are fitted subject to meeting certain criteria.

In addition, Community Fire Link Alarms are radio linked to the Careline box and in the event of a fire, the call centre will be alerted via the linked alarm. These again are fitted free of charge by West Sussex Fire and Rescue Services and are fitted subject to the occupier having Careline and meeting certain criteria.

For more information on any of the above please contact:

Horsham District Fire Safety Centre, Hurst Road, HORSHAM  
West Sussex RH12 2DN  
Tel: 01403-213280  
Fax:01403-213298  
Email: [horshamdistrictoffice@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:horshamdistrictoffice@westsussex.gov.uk)

# Highway Rangers

From April 2008 the Highway Rangers service is being extended from the Southern Area Office (of West Sussex) to a countywide service. There will be three two-person teams, one based at each area office to provide a highly visible service, carrying out a wide range of small-scale street scene improvement works. The offices are located at Clapham (Worthing), Broadbridge Heath (Horsham) and Drayton (Chichester), each cover approximately one third of the County. Each team will rotate between the County Local Committee areas within their section of the county, working in each approximately every five weeks. The Rangers will be able to respond to locally identified issues from residents, parishes, councillors and partner organisations.

Some of the work that the Highway Rangers will undertake includes:

- Cutting back overgrown vegetation.
- Trimming the edges of grass verges.
- Clearing weeds.



- Sign cleaning.
- Removing unlawful signs.
- Renovating WSCC street furniture

Any requests for work which you would think the Highway Rangers could do in your town or village can be made by calling 01243 642105 (please mention Highway Rangers) or emailing [highway.rangers@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:highway.rangers@westsussex.gov.uk)

The Highway Rangers do not carry out work that is done by our safety/day gangs such as pothole or footway repairs, these can be reported either by phoning 01243 642105 or by '[report a fault](#)' on the WSCC website.

## Disability Equality Scheme



Disability Equality Scheme  
2006 - 2009



An updated disability Equality Scheme will be published on the Horsham District Council website and available in alternative formats to be sent to interested parties upon request.

This updated scheme informs what progress has been made on the large number of action points HDC set itself with consultation with local disabled people. Horsham District Council has also launched its Single Equality Scheme to include the other equality strands around race, age, gender, faith/belief and sexual orientation. For more information on the Single Equality Scheme please contact Tony Higgins on [tony.higgins@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:tony.higgins@horsham.gov.uk) or 01403 215300

# ROUNABOUT TALKING NEWS

## Horsham's Talking Newspaper for the Visually Impaired

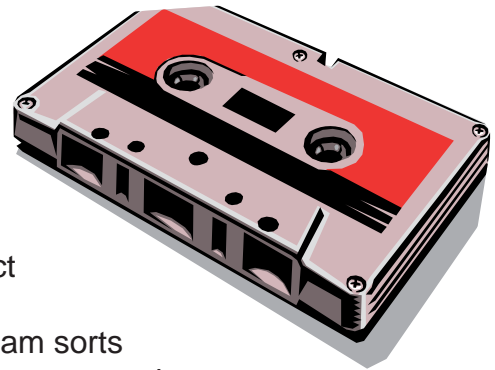
Roundabout is a registered charity providing a free weekly audiotape of local news to the visually impaired of Horsham and district.

Each week on a Thursday evening a team of editors select articles from the West Sussex County Times that are then edited. A team of readers records these items, another team sorts and electronically cleans the returned tapes and another team records the "magazine" which is a miscellany of items such as interviews, cookery, gardening, stories, shopping information and listeners' comments.

On Friday morning yet another team copies the required number of tapes that are sent free through the post under a concession from the Post Office.

This service is provided free of charge with the entire operation being run by approximately 50 volunteers: the studio accommodation being generously provided by Freeman Brothers - Funeral Directors.

The volunteers running the service, welcome newcomers to their ranks and the Secretary, Martyn Field, (telephone number 01403 891306 or e-mail to [martynfield@talktalk.net](mailto:martynfield@talktalk.net)), is pleased to give details to those interested. Similarly, if anyone knows of someone who would enjoy such a service as the free weekly tapes, please contact Martyn.



## APR - it's not to do with credit cards!



The Accessible Property Register (APR) is a property website specialising in accessible and adapted property for sale and rent. The site includes adverts for private and social housing, retirement property, and wheelchair accessible holiday accommodation. APR accepts property adverts free of charge from private individuals, or if preferred, can recommend a local APR Approved estate agent.'

Contact:

Conrad Hodgkinson

E-Mail: [conradh@accessible-property.org.uk](mailto:conradh@accessible-property.org.uk)

Tel: 0774 9119385

<http://www.accessible-property.org.uk/>



# Interview

## Elizabeth Day (Access Forum member)

### Can you tell us a little bit about your disability?

I have been registered blind for 20 years (lost sight over last 20/30 years). I would like to add that only a small percentage of people who are registered blind have no vision whatsoever.

### What advice would you give to other people who may be losing their vision?

I would encourage people to keep things in perspective and carry on where possible doing the things done before the sight loss. (Elizabeth does however suggest that some activities as driving and using dangerous machinery needs to be curtailed or stopped!)

I also feel just because I have a disability, it does not mean you can't help others.

(Elizabeth was on the original Access Committee and now a regular contributor to the Access Forum, both at the large Forum meetings and also the planning review meetings which happen every three weeks to review plans and check to see how accessible the commercial applications are for disabled people).

I have also been chairperson of a local support group for people with Macular Degeneration (MD) for five years. This can result in tunnel vision, or left with peripheral vision which can greatly disrupt daily life. The group meets monthly and we have a range of guest speakers and have equipment demonstrations as well as a chance to chat with other people who have MD.

We are actually looking for new volunteers to help with the group, so anyone interested let me know! (Get in touch with access officer for details)

### Can you tell me what gadgets you may use to assist you in everyday life?

I use an Eclipse which is an electronic magnifier, it can be used to change the colour and size of words, but I just use it for magnification only. I use it to read instructions, back of packets and cards or letters. I also use it for writing too. Sometimes the writing on my shopping list is so small shopkeepers can't read it!

I also have a mobile phone which has specific software called "communic8" which allows me to "listen" to my text messages and other functions on the phone. I love it!

### With regards to alternative formats, what do you prefer?

I can use Braille, but am quite rusty with this. I tend to get information in usual printed format, and then I use my magnifier as mentioned earlier.

### What sort of hobbies do you have?

I am interested in activities like knitting, gardening and walking. I don't let my blindness be a barrier to taking part in every day activities.

# Disablism Hate Crime

Disablism, as a term, is a fairly new description, the concept, on the other hand, is not. Scope describe disabilism as 'discriminatory, oppressive or abusive behaviour arising from the belief that disabled people are inferior to others'. According to a Scope Tickbox survey of disabled people in 2007, 47% of respondents had 'experienced physical abuse or witnessed physical abuse of a disabled companion'.

MENCAP research found that 90% of participants with a learning disability had experienced bullying and harassment. In 2007 Steven Hoskins, a man with learning disabilities was murdered in a disabilist attack. As with racism, homophobia and transphobia, disabilism is a hate crime or hate incident.

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) defines hate crime as:

*'any incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate'*

The ACPO define a disabilist incident is as

*'any incident, which is perceived to be based upon prejudice towards or hatred of the victim because of their disability or so perceived by the victim or any other person'*

This means that if anyone feels that they have been treated in a discriminatory manner - which could include physical or verbal attacks - because of any disability then that individual can report it. Reports can be made either directly to the police or, from the Autumn, to The Harm Reduction Team. Within West Sussex, the Harm Reduction Team, through partners, will be working to tackle disabilism in both a reactive and proactive manner. The report will be logged onto a county-wide database and support offered to victims to help them deal with the incident both practically and emotionally.

For further details, please contact the Harm Reduction Team [harm.reduction@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:harm.reduction@westsussex.gov.uk), or call 01243 382949.



## HIV - A disability?

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 provided some limited protection against discrimination faced by people with HIV and AIDS, but this was limited in scope because the Act did not automatically apply to a person who was HIV-positive. This was changed by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, which updated and amended the 1995 Act. As a result of the 2005 Act, a person with HIV is "deemed" to be a disabled person for the purposes of the legislation.

For example, in a case in 2005, an HIV-positive carer - who worked with men with aggressive behavioural difficulties - was dismissed by his employers, who argued that there was a risk that he could be bitten by clients who could then be infected with HIV. He took action under the Disability Discrimination Act, arguing that this risk was negligible, given that cases of HIV being transmitted by biting are exceptionally rare. A tribunal ruled in his favour.

# Disability Cricket

The Community Development Department at Horsham District Council has pledged to establish new activities for a range of disabled people in the Horsham District. These include:

- Two activity courses run for people with mental health issues
- A new arts and mental health group
- An Aspergers arts group
- Disability cricket initiative

*John Burroughs Community Cricket Officer tells us more about what's happening with disability cricket in the Horsham District.*

I am responsible for the 'Disability Cricket Initiative'

through the running of the 'Horsham Area Community Cricket Project' which started back in March 2007.

Throughout the last year I have been involved with the following organisations undertaking sessions during the curriculum, after school, and in the holiday time. These include:

**QE2 School**, Grasshoppers (Organisation providing school holiday provision)

**Muntham House** (School) , **Manor House** (School) and **Strawford Centre** (Centre for adults with learning disabilities)

There is also the potential to get involved in Strawford 's 'community project' in supporting some of their

members to help in the local community, for example, a volunteer placement at a local school for one day per week with cricket/sports.

Disability cricket has been identified as a priority by the English Cricket Board, and I will be working alongside Sussex County Cricket Club to establish a structure for this across the county. I believe certain clubs will be identified as focal points for disability cricket, and once this is established we will be able to provide pathways for disabled players.

For people who want more information this contact *John Burroughs* [john.burroughs@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:john.burroughs@horsham.gov.uk) or 01403 215642



# Spotlight - The Strawford Centre

The Strawford Day Centre provides services for its 112 adults with a learning disability.

This includes provision for 12 people with profound and complex needs. There are 30 people employed in the centre, and there is a well established training programme to enable them to develop their skills. An example of the range of training and activities that are provided are: Yoga, gardening, woodwork, arts, crafts, drama and painting. Cooking is also a popular course whereby service users can learn how to make meals, bake cakes and learn about healthy eating. There are also popular sports groups that take part in football, swimming and cricket.

An important part of what The Strawford Centre does is to encourage individual service users to develop their transport skills and to access mainstream employment and educational opportunities.

In addition to fundraising for the Centre to do more activities, there is a small group of service users called the "Helping Others" group who take on a fundraising role to raise funds for national projects such as Comic Relief.

For more information please contact The Strawford Centre on 01403 261488. A website is being created and will be launched shortly.



# Need help in starting your own business?

Enham's Business Ability programme helps disabled and disadvantaged people to start their own business, and has helped 1000 clients to set up in self employment since the launch in 2001.

The programme is a free and confidential service designed to help clients to make their business ideas happen and progress towards self employment. It includes information, advice and guidance from a team of professional business advisors across eight counties in the South of England including West Sussex, with help in areas such as business planning, market research and PR.

One Business Ability success story is Andy West from Horsham. When Andy was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis and Fibromyalgia, a painful and debilitating illness, his physiotherapist suggested he take up sewing to keep his hands supple. At the same time he met an international teddy bear artist who gave him his first bear pattern and told him to get sewing!



Looking for advice, Andy was recommended to talk to John Fox, Enham's Business Ability Advisor for West Sussex.

'John was instrumental in getting my business started' said Andy. 'He helped me with producing a comprehensive business plan - something I'd never done before. His advice and support were so useful in creating a real platform for my success. I also received a grant from Enham which helped me to purchase a digital camera in order to take pictures of my products and set up my own web site'.

Sales for Westie Bears have trebled, with an expanding customer base across the world. Andy has won British Teddy Bear Artist of the Year (miniatures) and more recently, the Bronze Winner in this year's Barclays Trading Places Awards.

Enham is a registered charity with almost 90 years' experience of working with people with a wide range of disabilities and long-term health problems. Based in Hampshire.

**For more information on Business Ability in West Sussex, please telephone John Fox on 07843 038799.**



# COUNTY NEWS

## Carers' Emergency Respite Care Scheme

Many carers worry about what would happen to the person they care for if, for example, they become ill, or were involved in an accident. The *carers' emergency respite scheme* is intended to provide the carer with peace of mind by making sure that home-based care can be put in place for a short time.

The scheme is run by the West Sussex Crossroads schemes in partnership with the ICIS information service and the county council. Care can be provided for up to 48 hours, or for 72 hours over a weekend or bank holiday. This enables someone to stay safely in their own home until the emergency is over, or other care arrangements can be made.

Please contact Crossroads between Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 4.00pm

Phone: 01403 243924

Email: [admin@westsxcrossroads.org](mailto:admin@westsxcrossroads.org)

## RECYCLING CLINICAL WASTE

A free clinical waste service is available from Horsham District Council for items such as needles, stoma bags and incontinence pads. If you require a clinical waste collection call the Environmental Services on 01403 733144.

### More Readers?

If you know of anyone in the Horsham District who would like to get an emailed or printed version of this newsletter, let us know!

## Dates for your diary

