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## Scope DIAL UK news

### Scope regionalisation plans and the future of Scope DIAL UK – message from Ruth Sutherland, Executive Director of Services, Scope

Many of you will be aware that we are currently moving forward with proposals for a regional structure in our services at Scope.

As part of this, we are also taking the opportunity to incorporate the support we provide to DIAL groups more fully with the rest of the organisation. We believe this will put us in a good position to build stronger relationships with DIAL groups and to provide an even better service in the future.

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#### Scope DIAL UK

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The main changes that will affect DIAL groups will be:

- introduction of more regional and local staff working specifically on information and advice – meaning there will be more opportunities to work together at a local level
- introduction of a new Knowledge and Learning Directorate, which will design new information and advice products that can be available for use throughout Scope and the DIAL network.

These changes will mean that the current Scope DIAL UK team will no longer exist in its current form. However, there are roles within the new Scope services structure that have similar responsibilities and require similar skills, so there will be no interruption to our support for DIAL groups and no impact on the quality of service we provide. There will also be no immediate change to contact details or to any of the support we offer, including Network News. Everyone who is affected by the restructure will have opportunities to apply for roles in the new structure, and this process is now underway. We will be doing everything we can to support the current Scope DIAL UK team through these changes, including staff and volunteers.

We see this very much as a natural progression of the merger between Scope and DIAL UK three years ago. We are completely committed to continuing to provide excellent support for DIAL groups, while also respecting and valuing your independence and expertise. The restructure will put us in a position to understand the work of DIAL groups better and develop our relationships further. To ensure this happens in the right way, we want to hear from you. Over the next month or two, we plan to set up some meetings across the country where you can meet with us and tell us how you would like to work together in future. We will be sharing some dates and locations soon and I am very much looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible.

In the meantime, if you have any questions about the restructure, please contact Steve Cairns at [stephen.cairns@scope.org.uk](mailto:stephen.cairns@scope.org.uk) or on 01745 856303

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## Members news

### New members

Scope DIAL UK would like to welcome the following groups who have joined over the past few months:

- Brainbox
- Ipswich Disabled Advice Bureau
- Gateopener
- Norwich MS Society
- Disability Hackney
- Hammersmith and Fulham Action On Disability

- Swansea Association for Independent Living
  - Dudley Centre for Independent Living
  - Equalities National Council
  - Infosend
  - Disability Powys
  - Bradnet
  - Deafblind UK
  - Health is Wealth
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## Calderdale D.A.R.T Cancer Support Service

Most people affected by cancer will have concerns about their financial stability. However, not everyone with cancer may actually qualify for benefits. Most people are aware of the excellent welfare benefits advice service provided by Macmillan Cancer Support. They provide a telephone advice and information service offering practical and financial support.

In Calderdale, they are fortunate to have an NHS Trust that now funds a specific welfare benefits service for people affected by cancer. This service is delivered by Calderdale D.A.R.T and they have been providing an advice service to people who are sick or disabled for over 26 years.

People affected by cancer have always been able to access the service offered by D.A.R.T. However, because they have now been allocated funding from the Calderdale and Kirklees NHS Trust, they are able to offer a dedicated service which is specifically for those people living in Calderdale, who have cancer. This is delivered via a full time adviser post of 37 hours. The post is a job share, divided between two experienced Disability Rights Advisers and allows them to deliver a year round service.

They will visit clients in their own homes, as in-patients at Calderdale Royal or see them in their Halifax town centre office. They also offer some flexibility around their working hours so that people who may work full time for example, can access the service outside of our usual office hours (by prior arrangement).

They receive referrals for the service from various agencies including: the CNSs; The Macmillan Unit; Consultant Oncologists; GPs; Palliative and Community Nursing Teams; Social Services and so on.

Many of their clients initially contact them for benefit advice usually because they do not know if they will be able to continue to work during their treatment, or if they will be able to return to work at all. They need accurate and reliable advice and they usually need it fairly quickly. Their aim is to contact most clients within one week of referral and offer an appointment within two weeks.

**Visit** [www.calderdaledart.org.uk](http://www.calderdaledart.org.uk)

**Source** Calderdale D.A.R.T. Summer 2011 Newsletter

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## Any news?

If any group would like to have an article featured in this section, please contact us at Scope DIAL UK.

**Call** 01302 310123

**Email** [paul.carr@scope.org.uk](mailto:paul.carr@scope.org.uk)

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## Items of interest

### Big Society on the ground

A clutch of recent reports highlights a yawning gap between the government-led Big Society initiative and what is happening on the ground at local level.

In 'Civic Limits – How much more involved can people get?', think-tank 'ResPublica' calls for the difficulties in getting people engaged on the scale needed. It highlights a small 'civic core' of the population that accounts for most of the activity taking place, "whether volunteering, charitable giving or civic participation" and that around "30% of our adult population currently do 90% of all volunteer hours and 70% of civic participation".

Unless the size of this 'civic core' is increased, the vision of building a bigger society will, according to the report's authors, remain "wishful thinking". They explain that: "People belonging to this 'core' are more likely to be well educated and middle class than the population as a whole".

Recommendations on how to tackle this include participation initiatives that work for the whole community, businesses, rethinking their approach to CSR with a focus on enabling civic participation and, most importantly, getting on with the job rather than protracted engagement in 'pointless consultation'.

Another report, 'From Big Society to Social Productivity', by Henry Kippin and Ben Lucas of the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) calls the government's Big Society narrative 'hazy' and cites Liverpool City Council's withdrawal as a Big Society champion as an example of the 'seeming asymmetry between the twin narratives of deficit reduction and Big Society'.

It calls for three profound shifts in public services to enable a new focus on social productivity to succeed. These are:

- A shift in culture – Public services need to engage and enrol citizens, families, communities, enterprises and wider society in creating better outcomes as partners and rather than closing public amenities because of budget cuts, they should be run as mutuals by local people.
- A shift in power – It recommends that a 'new deal' is brokered for cities and counties, in which they take over primary responsibility for commissioning most public services.

- A shift in finance – It calls for a more transparent and understandable approach to communicating contributions and benefits to citizens – to allow them to use public services more responsibly. And ‘co-payment and partnership funding models’ are recommended where services generate personal as well as public benefits, such as higher education and long-term care.

**Source Caritas August 2011**

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## Social Care Costs

The Commission on Funding of Care and Support has presented its findings to the government in its report ‘Fairer Care Funding’, the Dilnot Report, published on 4 July 2011. The independent commission was asked to recommend a fair and sustainable funding system for adult social care in England.

Recommendations include:

- Individuals’ lifetime contributions towards their social care costs – which are currently potentially unlimited – should be capped. After the cap is reached, individuals would be eligible for full state support. A cap of £35,000 was suggested as the ‘most appropriate and fair figure’.
- The means-tested threshold, above which people are liable for their full care costs, should be increased from £23,250 to £100,000.
- National eligibility criteria and portable assessments should be introduced to ensure greater consistency.
- All those who enter adulthood with a care and support need should be eligible for free state-support immediately rather than being subject to a means test.
- The Commission estimates that its proposals – based on a cap of £35,000 – would cost the state around £1.7bn and the report’s authors anticipate this will encourage the take-up of insurance schemes to further cover individual long-term care costs.
- Costs to the treasury could be covered by a ‘specific tax increase’.

**Source Caritas August 2011**

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## Self-advocates break new ground with internet broadcast

Disabled activists have used a ground-breaking internet broadcast to call on self-advocacy organisations to return to their campaigning roots and fight for their local communities. They want groups to take part in a series of lunchtime civil rights protests across the country on Thursday 22 September, which they hope will be led by people with learning difficulties.

Organising local protests will make it easier for people with learning difficulties to take part, as many do not have the money or support necessary to attend major

protests in London and have raised concerns about their safety at big demonstrations.

The Back to your Roots broadcast was part of the Advocacy and Leadership Project, funded by the Labour government's 'Valuing People Now' programme and hosted by the disability organisation Inclusion North. The project aims to strengthen advocacy and the leadership skills of people with learning difficulties across the country.

The project team hope some people will also become leaders within the wider disability movement and will campaign for their local communities, and not just for other people with learning difficulties.

Following a consultation, activists working on the project concluded that many self-advocacy organisations had lost touch with their old campaigning spirit and were now little more than social groups.

To spread the word about the September protests, and discuss what issues people should campaign about, the project team, including self-advocacy veteran Gary Bourlet, the project's co-ordinator, organised a live broadcast over the internet. The broadcast involved 10 leading self-advocates from Yorkshire and Humberside, and is thought to be the first time people with learning difficulties have been involved in such an event.

Among the issues they raised were calls for more funding for self-advocacy groups threatened with closure because of spending cuts; the need to tackle disability hate crime; problems with public transport; and calls for "real jobs with real wages".

The project team are organising a second broadcast later this month to provide an update on the campaign.

**Visit** [www.inclusionnorth.org](http://www.inclusionnorth.org)

**Source** [www.disabilitynewsservice.com](http://www.disabilitynewsservice.com)

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## Mayor takes Liberty with demand for money from hard-up charities

Disability charities already facing the fall-out from the government's spending squeeze were asked by London's mayor to bid thousands of pounds for the right to use one of two stalls at the capital's annual disability arts festival.

One charity, Disability Law Service (DLS), wanted to use a stall at the Liberty festival on Saturday 3 September to provide vital free legal advice for disabled people suffering from the effects of spending cuts.

But the mayor, Boris Johnson, effectively created a "sealed bid" auction to find the two highest bids from charities for the available stalls outside the Southbank Centre on the southern bank of the Thames.

The other stalls had already been reserved for public sector organisations and unions – paying £5,000 each – and organisations connected with the running of the festival, which have not been asked to pay.

DLS has attended the festival on several occasions in previous years, and its staff are always “inundated” by disabled people seeking legal advice.

DLS has never been asked to pay for a stall before. Instead, it has used its extensive contacts to publicise the festival.

But it was told by one of the mayor’s staff that he had to obtain the maximum income possible for the two stalls. He said all the charities were being asked to put in closed bids, and refused to suggest a reasonable sum for DLS to offer.

The mayor’s office did later back down, following criticism, and has now offered DLS a free stall in exchange for publicising the event.

Liberty has established itself as an important date on the capital’s disability arts calendar, and has become a tourist attraction in its own right, raising awareness of disability rights and boosting the profile of some of the country’s most talented disabled artists.

**Visit** [www.dls.org.uk](http://www.dls.org.uk)

**Source** [www.disabilitynewsservice.com](http://www.disabilitynewsservice.com)

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## Council cuts research paints troubling picture

Scores of disabled people’s organisations (DPOs) and other disability charities across England have had their council funding cut or removed completely this year, according to new research.

Including DPOs, more than 150 disability charities have had their funding reduced, as well as more than 100 adult social care charities.

The figures were obtained by the campaign group False Economy – which is backed by unions and anti-cuts groups – after submitting Freedom of Information Act requests to local authorities.

The research shows that charities will face net reductions in council funding of more than £110 million this year, with this total sure to increase as some councils are still to make funding decisions and others have yet to respond to False Economy.

Some DPOs facing significant cuts include the Council of Disabled People Coventry and Warwickshire (CDP), which has had its county council funding for its work promoting personalisation almost halved from £19,000 to just £10,000.

Two regional schemes have been set up to support DPOs in the Midlands because they had been closing down “left, right and centre”, he said, and there were still “major concerns for the future”.

A string of other DPOs across England also appear to have had their council funding cut, many of them by about 10 per cent.

In addition to DPOs, many more non user-led disability and social care charities, most of them providing services to disabled adults, parents of disabled children and carers, have seen reductions in their council funding.

Charities providing mobility services to disabled people also appear to have been badly affected, with several local Shopmobility and Dial-a-Ride schemes facing cuts.

**Visit** [www.falseeconomy.org.uk](http://www.falseeconomy.org.uk)

**Source** [www.disabilitynewsservice.com](http://www.disabilitynewsservice.com)

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## Disabled activist wins right to challenge council cuts

A disabled activist with one of the country's leading self-advocacy organisations has won the right to challenge in the high court a council's decision to remove its funding.

Georgina Barrett has secured the right to a full judicial review hearing of Lambeth council's decision not to renew annual contracts worth £118,000 with People First Lambeth (PFL).

The funding made up 94% of PFL's annual revenue, and Barrett and other people with learning difficulties from Lambeth are now fighting for the survival of their organisation, which was set up in 1985.

Her lawyers will claim the council failed in its public sector equality duty – under the Disability Discrimination Act – to pay due regard to the impact of the cuts on disabled people and the need to promote disability equality, and to consult or engage with PFL members, before making the decision.

Barrett's lawyers will also be challenging the council's continuing efforts to decide on future services. They will use the new Equality Act to argue that removing PFL's funding has made it impossible for members to secure the support they need to take part in the new consultation process.

The case is likely to be heard in the high court in London this autumn. It is the latest in a series of high-profile judicial reviews of decisions by public bodies to slash services and spending following huge cuts by the coalition government.

But this will be one of the first cases to challenge a council using the Equality Act's new single equality duty, which came into force on 5 April.

It will also be one of the first to suggest that a public body has failed to have due regard through its decisions to the need to encourage disabled people to participate in public life.

**Visit** [www.peoplefirstlambeth.org.uk](http://www.peoplefirstlambeth.org.uk)

**Source** [www.disabilitynewsservice.com](http://www.disabilitynewsservice.com)



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## UKDPC boss's anger after government denies vital support

The government's commitment to supporting disabled people in employment has been questioned again, after a prominent disabled leader had his application for workplace support rejected.

Jaspal Dhani, chief executive of the UK Disabled People's Council (UKDPC), has been told he is not eligible for funding from the Access to Work (ATW) scheme because he has such a senior position.

He said: "I had applied to ATW for a support worker. Their response was that as I am the chief executive, the organisation should be able to afford to pay for the PA [personal assistant] I require." UKDPC employs the equivalent of only two full-time members of staff, including Dhani himself.

He said: "I explained that we are a very small organisation and we have very limited resources and the organisation certainly cannot afford to appoint the full-time PA I require." He is appealing the decision to turn down his application.

Although UKDPC employs a part-time member of staff to work in its London office, that role covers administrative duties, and is not intended to provide the support he needs as a disabled employee, while funding for the post could end shortly.

Dhani, a wheelchair-user, said: "I am a disabled person in full-time work and with an identified need for a support worker. If I cannot get the support I need from ATW, then I risk losing my job."

The case comes at an embarrassing time for the government, as new figures published this week show the number of disabled people receiving ATW support fell from 37,270 in 2009-10 to 35,830 in 2010-11.

The number of successful new claimants has fallen even more sharply, from 16,520 in 2009-10 to just 13,240 in 2010-11, despite the government's claim that its controversial welfare reform programme is aimed at helping more disabled people off benefits and into work.

Dhani said: "This is one of the fundamental issues that we have been trying to stress to the Department for Work and Pensions [DWP] in terms of their revision of the ATW scheme. "They say they want to support disabled people into work, but the current scheme falls short and fails many disabled employees."

A DWP spokeswoman said their ATW team was now re-examining Dhani's case.

**Visit** [www.ukdpc.net](http://www.ukdpc.net)

**Source** [www.disabilitynewsservice.com](http://www.disabilitynewsservice.com)

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## Government dismisses ATW alarm bells

Government figures have confirmed a dramatic slump in the number of disabled people granted funds to make their workplaces more accessible.

Figures published quietly by the government recently show there were just 13,240 “new customers” helped by the Access to Work (ATW) scheme in 2010-11, compared with 16,520 the previous year, a fall of nearly a quarter.

The total number of disabled people receiving ATW (which includes those continuing to receive support after claiming successfully in previous years) has also fallen, from 37,270 in 2009-10 to 35,830 in 2010-11.

In the first half of 2010-11, 7,700 new customers were helped (an average of 1,283 a month). This dropped to an average of 980 a month in the third quarter, and has now plunged to an average of just 867 a month from January to March 2011.

New ATW rules mean employers or disabled employees themselves now have to fund equipment such as basic versions of voice-activated software, most adapted chairs, and satellite navigation devices, rather than having them funded through ATW.

Visit [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

Source [www.disabilitynewsservice.com](http://www.disabilitynewsservice.com)

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## BBC has ‘turned its back on disability’

The BBC has been accused of turning its back on reporting the crucial issues affecting disabled people, after admitting it will not be replacing its specialist disability news correspondent.

Geoff Adams-Spink, the BBC’s age and disability correspondent and one of the country’s leading disabled journalists, left the BBC in April to set up his own company.

But the BBC admitted this week that it will not be appointing another specialist to take over the role, even though it employs a string of specialist correspondents covering everything from transport and rural affairs to education, religious affairs, science and technology.

Adams-Spink, who declined to comment, had reported on disability issues for BBC News Online, radio and television.

The BBC’s admission comes only weeks after the broadcaster sparked anger by deciding to shut down internet message boards that allowed disabled people to start their own online discussions and seek advice on topics such as benefits cuts, discrimination and healthcare.

The message boards were run by Ouch!, the BBC’s own disability website, which has now become part of the BBC News department.

A BBC spokeswoman confirmed that Adams-Spink would not be replaced.

She said disability issues for BBC News were “covered fully by the UK affairs team, in particular BBC’s social affairs correspondent Alison Holt”.

She said the Ouch! team would be “working across the news website” and would “bring diverse disability stories and context to all audiences whilst also maintaining a conversation with the disability community”, while the BBC had also “given special focus to disability issues when editorially appropriate”.

**Visit** [www.adams-spink.com](http://www.adams-spink.com)

**Source** [www.disabilitynewsservice.com](http://www.disabilitynewsservice.com)

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## Website highlight’s London’s inclusion shame as it prepares for 2012

Angry disabled activists have launched a website to highlight the “shameful” failure to put access and inclusion at the heart of next year’s London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics.

They have focused their anger on the mayor of London, Boris Johnson, who they say is painting an inaccurate and overly positive view of access in the capital, and has ignored the impact of brutal cuts to government spending.

After the Beijing Olympics in 2008, Johnson promised that London would host the “most accessible and inclusive Olympic and Paralympic games ever”, and he repeated that pledge when launching his Inclusive London website this March.

His website details the access features of hotels, restaurants, pubs, tourist attractions and 2012 venues and aims to be the “first port of call” for disabled people planning a trip to the capital.

But activists have now launched their own website, Inclusive London? which they say allows disabled visitors to see “how inclusive and accessible London really is”.

Their “unofficial visitor guide” includes information on the mayor’s decision to slash plans to improve step-free access at tube stations, problems with the city’s inaccessible black taxis, cuts to Dial-a-Ride services, and problems with blue badge parking in central London.

The site also highlights cuts to disability benefits, workplace discrimination, the impact of air pollution on the life expectancy of the city’s disabled people, cuts to legal aid, the shortage of accessible housing, the coalition government’s pledge to “remove the bias towards inclusion” in the education system, and the tiny proportion of Cultural Olympiad funding that is going to disabled artists.

The website draws unfavourable comparisons with other cities to have hosted the Olympics and Paralympics, such as Barcelona, Beijing and Seoul.

**Visit** [www.inclusivelondon.com](http://www.inclusivelondon.com)

**Source** [www.disabilitynewsservice.com](http://www.disabilitynewsservice.com)

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## Ofcom calls for ‘next generation’ of relay services

New measures that would see significant improvements to telephone “relay” services for people with hearing and speech impairments have been proposed by the industry regulator Ofcom.

Among proposals it is now consulting on, Ofcom wants to introduce a duty on providers to ensure access to a “next generation” text relay service, at a likely cost of less than £16 million a year.

It also wants communications providers to offer access to a new video relay service for users of British Sign Language (BSL).

Video relay services are currently only available commercially, and mainly funded through the government’s Access to Work scheme.

Because such a service could cost more than £100 million a year – if demand was high – due to the need for trained interpreters, Ofcom has proposed restricting the video relay service to certain times of the day, or giving users a monthly allocation of minutes.

If the two proposals are confirmed following the consultation, Ofcom would update the legal duties already imposed on communications providers such as BT, Sky and TalkTalk. Text relay involves an assistant converting typed messages into speech and then converting the spoken response back into typed words.

There is currently only one widely-available national text relay service – operated by BT but available to customers of all service-providers – but it uses technology that is 30 years old and has been described by campaigners as “slow and cumbersome”.

Many BSL-users find the text relay service difficult to use. Video relay services allow them to communicate in their first language, BSL, and enjoy conversations that are “quicker and more fluid” than those using text relay.

Ofcom research found deaf and speech-impaired people still believed text relay played “an important role” in ensuring they could communicate on an “equivalent basis” to voice telephone calls.

But they criticised the BT service for slow conversation speeds, the lack of privacy, and the inability to express or detect emotion, or to be used with equipment such as personal computers and netbooks.

Among suggested features of the next generation text relay service, Ofcom wants users to be able to interrupt during a conversation through the use of “live captions”, instead of having to wait until the end of a message.

The consultation ends on 20 October 2011.

Visit [www.ofcom.org.uk](http://www.ofcom.org.uk)

Source [www.disabilitynewsservice.com](http://www.disabilitynewsservice.com)

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## The 'Hardest Hit' are set to protest across the UK

Disabled people across the UK are being urged to take part in a series of protests across the country against cuts to services and benefits.

The local and regional protests will take place this autumn as a follow-up to May's hugely successful national Hardest Hit protest in London.

The UK Disabled People's Council (UKDPC) is again working with members of the Disability Benefits Consortium to organise the follow-up protests, which will take place on 21 and 22 October. UKDPC hopes many of the protests will be led by disabled people's organisations (DPOs).

On Friday 21 October, the aim is for disabled people and other activists to lobby MPs at their weekly constituency surgeries. The following day, there will be marches, demonstrations and other protests across the UK.

The Hardest Hit protest on 11 May saw thousands of disabled people march through the streets of Westminster in protest at the government's cuts to disability benefits, its welfare reforms and cuts to services for disabled people. Some estimates put the number of people who took part at more than 10,000.

UKDPC has already heard from 20 DPOs that are interested in taking part in the protests, including organisations in Wales and Northern Ireland.

**Visit:** [www.ukdpc.net](http://www.ukdpc.net)

**Source** [www.communitycare.co.uk](http://www.communitycare.co.uk)

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## DPOs boycott charities' 'independent' review of mobility needs

Disabled people's organisations (DPOs) are to boycott a review set up by two of the big disability charities into one of the most controversial parts of the government's welfare reform bill.

Leonard Cheshire Disability and Mencap announced recently that they were launching a new "independent review" into how the mobility needs of people living in residential care are met and funded.

The review will provide recommendations to the coalition by the end of October, running in parallel with an "internal review" being carried out by the government. The charities' review will also be used to brief peers as they debate the bill this autumn.

The bill currently gives the government powers to stop paying the mobility element of the new personal independence payment – which is set to replace disability living allowance – to people in state-funded residential homes.

But DPOs have raised concerns about the independence of the charities' new review and have questioned why no user-led organisations were told about it or asked to take part.

The review will be led by the disabled crossbench peer Lord [Colin] Low, former chair of RNIB and now its vice-president and also president of Disability Alliance.

The members of the review's "steering group" are a disabled resident of a Leonard Cheshire residential home, the governor of a special school, a local government expert, the director of a think-tank, and an expert in care provision.

**Visit:** [www.lowreview.org.uk](http://www.lowreview.org.uk)

**Source** [www.communitycare.co.uk](http://www.communitycare.co.uk)

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## Concern over replacement of ODI director

The government has replaced the disabled director of its Office for Disability Issues (ODI) with a non-disabled civil servant, without advertising the post externally.

Tim Cooper is moving to a new job as chief executive of Advance, a supported housing and employment charity, after two years as ODI's director.

ODI was set up in 2005 by the Labour government to help deliver equality for disabled people by 2025 and act as a champion for disabled people across government.

Cooper, who is deaf, has refused to discuss the reasons for his departure, amid speculation that he could be leaving due to unhappiness with the coalition's policies on disability and equality.

In January, he was forced publicly to defend the government's record after disabled activists criticised its programme of spending cuts and attitude to human rights.

When asked this week why Cooper was leaving, a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) spokesman said he was "returning to direct service provision, where he has spent the majority of his career to date".

He will be replaced in September by civil servant Jeremy Moore, who is not disabled and will also take on the role of director of independent living. He was appointed before many ODI staff were told Cooper was leaving.

Moore will now be responsible for all disability issues across the DWP, including employment, benefits and the ODI. He is currently director of the DWP's "departmental transformation programme".

**Visit** [www.odi.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.odi.dwp.gov.uk)

**Source** [www.communitycare.co.uk](http://www.communitycare.co.uk)

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## DPO funding is welcomed, but is still a ‘drop in the ocean’

The government has launched a scheme designed to support the growth of local disabled people’s organisations (DPOs).

Maria Miller MP, the minister for disabled people, was at West of England Centre for Inclusive Living in Bristol to launch the programme, which was first announced in May and will invest £3 million over four years in helping DPOs improve how they are run.

Miller announced that Rich Watts, director of policy and development for Essex Coalition of Disabled People, had been seconded part-time to the government’s Office for Disability Issues to lead the Strengthening Disabled People’s User-Led Organisations programme.

Campaigners have increasingly been raising concerns that the local authority spending squeeze – largely caused by the government’s deficit reduction plan – has been putting the future of many local DPOs at risk.

DPOs can now bid for “modest” amounts of money – expected to be a maximum of £10,000 and up to £30,000 in total over the four years of the scheme – to fund specific projects.

Stephen Lee Hodgkins, director of Disability LIB, which was itself set up to build the capacity of DPOs, welcomed the appointment of Watts, who he said was “the right person for the job”. He said the funding was welcome but “a drop in the ocean” when measured against the huge financial strain facing DPOs as a result of government cuts. He also said that funding was likely to be awarded for projects that fitted the government’s agenda, rather than the agenda of DPOs. But he welcomed the decision that any money that was needed to meet access requirements – such as BSL interpreters – would not be counted as part of the maximum funding DPOs could receive through the scheme.

Visit [www.disabilitylib.org.uk](http://www.disabilitylib.org.uk)

Source [www.communitycare.co.uk](http://www.communitycare.co.uk)

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## Government promises standards for personal assistants

Personal assistants will have access to minimum levels of training, and service users given guaranteed support in employing them as part of a framework for PAs published recently.

The Department of Health plan is designed to take account of the rising numbers of PAs employed directly by service users on personal budgets and concerns over the lack of consistent support and training for both users and PAs.

Key proposals include developing an induction framework for PAs to ensure they have access to minimum levels of training, in the same way that domiciliary and residential care staff do.

The framework said existing training for PAs was “patchy and inconsistent” and few councils offered ongoing training tailored to PAs. Assistants’ experience of induction varied. It said councils that commissioned user-led organisations to provide PA training had achieved good outcomes but warned that resources provided a barrier to improving levels of training.

The DH is working with the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services to establish a set standards of support that service users should expect in their role as PA employers to improve on current levels of provision.

This could include support with performance management, as well as technical support services such as payroll and finance.

The DH is also still exploring the scope for establishing a voluntary register of social care workers, including PAs, by 2013, which is dependent on the passage of the Health and Social Care Bill.

**Visit** [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)

**Source** [www.communitycare.co.uk](http://www.communitycare.co.uk)

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## PA strategy aims to boost numbers

New government guidance aims to boost the number of personal assistants (PAs), and make it easier for disabled people to employ them.

The new framework for supporting personal assistants in adult social care was launched recently by care services minister Paul Burstow. The framework has been “co-produced” by the Department of Health (DH) in partnership with organisations including the National Centre for Independent Living, other user-led organisations, local authorities, individual PAs and disabled employers of PAs.

The government said the strategy would provide support for PAs and their employers, but stressed that the framework was just a “starting point for further work”.

The framework says the government will work with its partners to ensure that employers of PAs have access to the right advice and support, including information on the practical side of employment such as how to interview potential employees and draw up job descriptions. The government will also continue to examine a possible voluntary register of social care workers – to include PAs – by 2013.

The new strategy is part of the government’s plans for the personalisation of adult social care. By 2013, the government wants every eligible service-user to be offered a personal budget to spend on their own care package.

It has estimated that by 2025 this could create nearly 1.2 million PA jobs in England, compared to the current total of less than 200,000.

**Visit** [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)

**Source** [www.communitycare.co.uk](http://www.communitycare.co.uk)



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## Disabled United!

Founder member of the Disabled People's Direct Action Network, Johnny Crescendo recognises the old conflict between rights and charity but says that now may be the time for a new way of bringing them together.

Almost as soon as the modern disability movement was born we had a slogan "Rights not Charity." I've still got the T-shirt. Our early founders rightly identified charities as a major obstacle to disabled people achieving their rights. As disability led organisations emerged we felt the competition for attention and resources from the charities. We wanted the issues that disabled people faced to be in an equalities framework not in a welfare, deserving poor, change in your pocket approach.

We were angry about the pathetic images of us that most charities used to portray in order to garner sympathy and raise money. We were critical of the fact that many charities were run for us and not by us, perpetuating the stereotype that we are useless and can't even beg for ourselves properly. We felt that some of the services that charities ran should really be run either by the Government or disabled people themselves.

The main players at advising the Government on disability policy were unaccountable and too often non-disabled representatives of the charities.

Finally we saw the charities as based on a medical model of disability with each cripple in their impairment specific group with their own charity and their own agenda.

As the disabled people's movement was born in the early 80s we set up our own cross-disability organisations run and controlled by disabled people, who could advocate directly on the issues that concerned us. We also created Centres for Independent Living.

Then in the early 90s we attacked the ITV Telethons challenging the images that they and the charities were perpetuating. We started non-violent civil disobedience as the handcuffs came out. These were very exciting and vibrant times for disabled people.

However we found that setting up organisations is very different to running and sustaining them. Secure funding was and is a constant challenge as is educating and empowering new leaders to step forward.

Not that changes didn't happen. We got the Independent Living Fund (ILF) and direct payments and care in the community. We are in a better place today than in 1981. The charities did not go away but, as we demanded they go, they chose to try and reform. The truth is that charities beg better than we do. We beg to elected councillors and the Government but they have a greater history of begging to the public at large.

We don't like begging if the truth be told, being nice to people we don't know. When the shit hits the fan, however, that's precisely what we do with councillors, MPs and other supporters. In other words we are still in the charity culture.

So here we are in 2011, both charities and disabled people's organisations claim to be representative of disabled people and acknowledge the Social Model. However let us be truthful in the fact that most people, most disabled people, do not understand and therefore cannot articulate the Social Model.

Some if not all the charities still run programmes that we want to see shut down; more so we want to see their whole ideology change.

We have chanted, we have marched, we have been confrontational and combative with the charities and it has not worked – they are still there. Maybe there has to be a better more fruitful way forward?

If we can bring ourselves to admit that we have failed to eradicate the charities can we change them into organisations we could support?

The goal would be to transform these large, wealthy and established organisations into disabled led organisations with a mission to implement the Social Model through their activities, moving from begging and misrepresentation to campaigning for rights and delivering public education; no longer competing with disabled led organisations but supporting and developing them; working together with other groups to find common ground and create a commonly agreed platform based on disability rights and equality.

In other words build a new disability movement!

Egos and personal history would need to be left at the door. Trust would have to be fostered and built upon.

My only request is that there would be a substantial majority of disabled people involved in this process who have the power to speak for their organisation.

It's a commonly shared view that at this time disabled people's rights are under threat like never before. The victories we have won over the past 30 years could be gone overnight. The sky is falling. So it's worth a shot.

**Source** [www.disabilitynow.org.uk](http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk)

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## Helping more disabled people get into politics

If the House of Commons were truly reflective of the people it represents, at least 65 would be disabled. While there are 10 million people registered disabled in the UK, there are no formal figures on the number of disabled election candidates; those standing for local or national office are not obliged to disclose such information.

The little research that does exist includes work by the University of Plymouth's elections centre. It conducted random surveys in 2008 and 2009 with more than

1,000 local election candidates. In 2008, when asked what best described their situation, 2.8% of candidates states they were permanently sick or disabled. In 2009, the figure was 1.3%.

Given the prejudice and stigma experienced by disabled people, it is easy to imagine how disability might be regarded as a vote loser, or activists might be put off supporting disabled candidates who need extra support.

But the government hopes to encourage more disabled people into local and national politics, and to improve public attitudes to disability through a new training and development scheme. The Access to Elected Office for Disabled People project includes plans for a £1m fund to help disabled politicians meet costs. Political parties will be asked to improve their internal disability policies and to work with the umbrella organisation, the Local Government Association, and disabled organisations to develop a cross-party network of disabled councillors and MPs, who would become ambassadors and role models for aspiring candidates. Consultation on the scheme ended in May and it should start later this year.

David Blunkett, blind since birth, and perhaps the UK's most well-known disabled politician, became a councillor in Sheffield 41 years ago. He says technological advances and legislation have helped to drive equality, and that he was never aware of other politicians or the public feeling that as a blind person he was not up to the job.

**Visit** [www.plymouth.ac.uk/elections](http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/elections)

**Source** Kingston CIL Newsletter – Summer 2011

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## Funding

### £10million to kick start Big Society public services

A £10million fund is being made available to charities and social enterprises to help them develop the skills and infrastructure to win more capital investment and public service contracts Nick Hurd, Minister for Civil Society, announced recently.

The Investment and Contract Readiness Fund is one of the latest in a number of actions paving the way for charities, social enterprises and other civil society organisations to play a bigger role in public service delivery. The Minister outlined plans in an open letter to the sector. As well as new opportunities to earn income from public service contracts, civil society organisations will soon have more access to capital investment when the Big Society Bank opens for business.

**Visit** [www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

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## True Colours Trust

The True Colours Trust provides grants to small, UK based organisations to carry out projects that provide help to disabled children and their families on a daily basis. The trust has a small grants programme open to applications at any time, that provides grants of up to £10,000, usually for one-off projects and delivery programmes for children, their siblings and families.

The trustees are particularly keen to support: Hydrotherapy pools, Multi sensory rooms, Mini buses, Young carers projects, Sibling projects, Bereavement support.

**Visit** [www.truecolourstrust.org.uk](http://www.truecolourstrust.org.uk)

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## Nationwide Small Grants Programme

The Nationwide Small Grants Programme is currently open to support registered charities offering financial and/or housing related support to survivors of domestic abuse or older people. Grants are from £500 to £5,000.

The funding aims to tackle financial exclusion affecting disadvantages groups across the UK and aims to address housing issues and homelessness among vulnerable groups across the UK.

**Visit** [www.nationwidefoundation.org.uk](http://www.nationwidefoundation.org.uk)

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## The ACT Foundation

The ACT Foundation provides grants for charities that enhance the quality of life for people in need, especially those focused on mentally and/or physically disabled people. There are no minimum or maximum grant amounts and funding can be used for building modifications, equipment such as mobility aids and financial assistance for things like short-term respite breaks.

**Visit** [www.theactfoundation.co.uk](http://www.theactfoundation.co.uk)

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## Calendar of events

### Free disability webinars

Martyn Sibley worked at Scope for five years and now he's working with Scope to launch a new project – free disability webinars. Each webinar is a 45 minute online presentation on a range of different topics including:

- parents of disabled people
- disabled teenagers
- independent living
- leisure and travel

The presentations explain how to live life the way you want to, overcome barriers and give you the required tools to be more independent and to meet new people. Afterwards there is an opportunity to ask your own specific questions.

You will see the slides, websites, spreadsheets and word documents I present, whilst I talk live about how they can help you. There is a 'chat-box' to ask me any questions, and each webinar is accessed from your nearest computer. Multiple people can even huddle around one screen!

**Visit** [www.scope.org.uk/webinars](http://www.scope.org.uk/webinars)

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## Charity Investment Conference

A successful investment strategy can play a key role in the effective management of a charity. Opportunities are always present, but in the volatile market that we find ourselves in there is also a heightened sense of potential risk. Moreover, with many charities facing changes in the way they receive their funding, more and more are relying on their investment returns. There has therefore never been a more crucial time to understand the forces shaping the performance of our portfolios and predicting future trends. The Charity Investment Conference includes some of the most recognisable and trusted names in charity investment - CCLA, Ruffer, Newton, Sarasin, Cazenove Capital, Barclays Wealth and Lazard – who will guide you through the things you need to know to get your strategies right.

**Venue** Central London

**Date** 17 October 2011

**Visit** [www.civilsociety.co.uk/events](http://www.civilsociety.co.uk/events)

**Call** 020 7819 1208

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## Training

### The-Centre (For Strategy and Communication)

Courses are now available for Autumn, within the following categories:

- The Management Ladder
- Management Courses
- Personal Effectiveness Courses
- Administration Courses
- Communication Courses
- Writing Courses

**Visit** [www.the-centre.co.uk](http://www.the-centre.co.uk)

**Call** 020 7490 3030

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## Publications

### Public Sector Equality Duty 'Quick-Start' Guide

The Government's Equalities Office has published a 'quick-start' to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The guide is intended to help public sector organisations understand a key measure in the Equality Act – the public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. The Equality Duty ensures that all public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all.

**Visit** [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities)

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### Choice and change: Disabled adults' and older people's experiences of making choices about services and support

Extending choice to users of publicly-funded services is central to current policies. New opportunities for choice have been introduced in social care and personal budgets are being piloted for some health conditions. But how important is choice about services for disabled people and their families?

This Social Policy Research Unit (SPRU) study investigated the realities of making choices about services and support over time, by disabled people of working age and older, who were likely to experience repeated choices due to their changing circumstances.

**Visit** <http://php.york.ac.uk/inst/spru/pubs/1997>

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### Your rights to fly – What you need to know

You do not need to be permanently or physically disabled to benefit from this service. In fact, anyone who has difficulty moving around, for example because of their disability, age or a temporary injury can receive help when they fly.

This short guide from the Equality and Human Rights Commission gives you an overview of your rights and explains what you can do to ensure your journey runs smoothly from start to finish.

**Visit** [www.equalityhumanrights.com/airtravel](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/airtravel)

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# Becoming an optometrist or dispensing optician – A guide for students and others with disabilities and health conditions

This guide, from the General Optical Council, has been written to provide clear information for people with a disability or other health condition who are interested becoming an optometrist or dispensing optician in the United Kingdom.

The guide has been put together to provide information on what you can expect during your application and studies, about your responsibilities and those of your educational institution, and about the General Optical Council's role as the regulator of optometrists and dispensing opticians.

Visit [www.optical.org](http://www.optical.org)

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## Money advice service

This is a service designed to help everyone manage their money better. They do this by giving clear, unbiased money advice to help people make informed choices.

The Money Advice Service believe that the right money advice can make a difference to people's lives. And when people take steps to manage their money better, they can live better too. The Money Advice Service is a free, independent service. They were set up by government and are funded by a levy on the financial services industry. Their advice and information is available online, over the phone and face to face. They provide tailored money advice to help you make choices throughout your life, whatever your circumstances.

Visit [www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk](http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk)

Call **0300 500 5000**

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## Other matters

### Contact us

All Scope DIAL UK staff can be contacted via the main Scope DIAL UK phone number: **01302 310 123** or email [dialuk@scope.org.uk](mailto:dialuk@scope.org.uk)

### Please note

We've made every effort in this mailing to use language in keeping with the Social Model of Disability. However, some terms used in this leaflet might not reflect this.

Although these are not our preferred terms, some of the materials used are quoted directly from source and used in their original format.