

# Network News

December 2011

Serving the disability advice network

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## Welcome

Welcome to the December issue of Network News. We hope you find this publication useful. If you have any comments or suggestions for future issues, please let us know. You can contact Tony Rucinski, Director of Knowledge and Learning, [tony.rucinski@scope.org.uk](mailto:tony.rucinski@scope.org.uk) or Veronica Lynch, Manager Scope Helpline [veronica.lynch@scope.org.uk](mailto:veronica.lynch@scope.org.uk).

## The first DIAL Scope Advisory Group

After our consultation with DIAL groups over the last three months, the first DIAL Scope Advisory Group met last week via teleconference to steer Scope's relationship and future development with the DIAL groups. Seven DIAL groups from across the country volunteered to take part with Scope colleagues for a productive discussion on DIAL groups' priorities for the network.

One of the main themes was that all groups said they'd like to meet and provide training on a regional basis as they felt there was a lot to be gained by networking

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with each other and local Scope Regional Response Workers. The group also said that they wanted in-depth training on technical issues that would challenge managers, as well as the basics for new volunteers. Other priorities included campaigning, development support, an ambassadors programme linking groups together and a review of the case management system. The advisory group decided to meet every other month initially and if you'd like to join us, please contact me directly.

It was fantastic to hear this feedback so that we can start to improve the support to the DIAL network and we'll be examining the issues raised in more detail with the DIAL Scope advisory group at our next meeting in February 2012.

Despite the festive season, as voluntary and not for profit organisations, we're facing bleak circumstances as the impact of public spending cuts continue to cut deep, putting more pressure on existing local groups and reducing the time and staff power that, as individual groups, we can offer. But I'm convinced that if we work together, share learning and resources, we face the best chance of providing direct support to more disabled people and their families at a time when we need it most.

I'm particularly encouraged by the campaigning work that our Policy and Campaigns team are doing against the welfare reforms on legal aid – you can read more about this on page 4. It's also good news that the Maria Miller, the Disability Minister announced that the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance would not be scrapped as planned. I'd like to share with the network, your examples of where you may be overcoming some of these challenges locally, which may be helpful best practice for other DIAL groups to learn from.

There will be many challenges ahead, but I believe, together, we face a more hopeful 2012. Thank you for your continued relationship with the DIAL Network and I look forward to working with you in the New Year.

Tony Rucinski,

Director of Knowledge and Learning, [tony.rucinski@scope.org.uk](mailto:tony.rucinski@scope.org.uk)

## Scope Helpline

The opening hours of the Scope Helpline over Christmas are as follows:

Friday 23 December, open 9am – 3pm

Saturday 24, Sunday 25 December, Closed

Monday 26 December, Closed

Tuesday 27 December, Closed

Wednesday 28, Thursday 29 and Friday 30 December, open 9am – 5pm

Saturday 31 December, Sunday 1 January and Monday 2 January, Closed

Tuesday 3 January, open 9am -5pm

## Statistics

We would like to keep collecting statistics about the number of new clients you were working with each month and/or quarter and the issues they wanted support with.

Collecting this information enables the DIAL network to play a key role in providing evidence for and meeting disabled people's needs, helping to build services and influence key decision makers on behalf of DIAL groups. We would like to report these figures regularly in Network News to highlight issues of common concern to DIAL groups and enable the network to take a more proactive approach. When the figures are reported, they will always represent DIAL group activity and not Scope activity, as DIAL groups are independent of Scope.

If you would like to continue to support this work, represent your clients and build the future of the network, please send your reports to Veronica Lynch, Manager Scope Helpline, [response@scope.org.uk](mailto:response@scope.org.uk), Scope, P.O. Box 833, Milton Keynes MK12 5NY

## Certificates of Membership

We are happy to re-issue interim certificates of DIAL membership to groups whose certificates may have expired or are about to expire. Please contact Veronica at Scope Response, details above.

## News from Around the Network

### Deafblind UK take part in Voluntary Organisations Disability Groups' report about personalisation

The report, titled 'Another Way: transforming peoples' lives through good practice in adult social care' seeks to demonstrate that social care need not be institutional, expensive and of poor quality, by presenting a handful of case studies which highlights the work of VODG members. Deafblind UK is extremely pleased to be involved with the report with its case study about Personalisation and Co-Production.

Please click here to read a [copy of the report](#). Please click here to read more on the [VODG blog](#).

<http://www.deafblind.org.uk/campaignsandnews/news>

**To share news from your group, please send a short story or weblink to [response@scope.org.uk](mailto:response@scope.org.uk)**

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## Legal update

### Lord help us save legal aid

Many DIAL groups have been sharing the current challenges of supporting people in their local areas who need legal aid to overturn inaccurate benefits decisions and aren't able to get it. Legal aid helps people who can't afford the cost of getting legal advice.

Last year, thousands of disabled people were helped by legal aid advisers to challenge benefits decisions that had left them struggling without the means to live. But the Government is trying to close the door of justice by taking away this vital lifeline for all welfare benefits cases. The House of Lords are currently debating changes which form part of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill and are likely to have an even greater impact on the people DIAL groups support.

Recently, we heard that, in some areas, there are no legal aid advisors and in other places, people are waiting up to a year for a tribunal. Now Scope's policy and campaigns team is lobbying government and campaigning nationally to keep legal advice available to everyone.

We need your help urgently to persuade the peers to throw out this plan. If you believe that the right to fair tribunals and justice should be available to everyone, please show your support by taking your seat in our virtual House of Lords (<http://bit.ly/lordshelpus>).

If we can demonstrate that there is widespread public support against these reforms, we stand a good chance of persuading the House of Lords to stop the Legal Aid Bill when they debate it in the New Year.

Please take your seat in our virtual House of Lords to save legal aid and encourage colleagues, friends and family to do the same.

For more information or to take part, go to <http://bit.ly/lordshelpus> or call Jamie Robertson on 020 7619 7370.

## The Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, has announced further savings to Benefits in his Autumn Statement 2011.

- Uprating most working age and disability benefits in line with the CPI in 2012-13, an increase of 5.2 per cent.
- The standard minimum income guarantee in Pension Credit will increase by 3.9 per cent.
- Raise the State Pension age to 67 between April 2026 and April 2028 in response to changes in demography. This measure is expected to save around £60 billion in today's prices between 2026-27 and 2035-36.
- Not go ahead with the planned £110 above inflation increase to the child element of the Child Tax Credit .
- Freezing the couple and lone parent elements of the Working Tax Credit in 2012-13.
- Uprate the child element of the Child Tax Credit and disability elements of tax credits in line with the Consumer Prices Index in 2012-13.
- Raise the threshold for Savings Credit in April 2012 to £111.10 for single pensioners and £177.20 for pensioner couples.
- Introduce the Youth Contract, worth a total of £940 million over the Spending Review period. In part it will provide extra support from Jobcentre Plus for unemployed 18-24 year olds, with additional advisor time and a careers interview from the National Careers Service after three months on Jobseeker's

Allowance (JSA), and with weekly, rather than fortnightly, signing for all 18-24 year olds from month five. Also will-

- Provide an offer of a work experience or a Sector Based Work Academy place for every unemployed 18-24 year old who wants one after three months on JSA, before they enter the Work Programme. The Government is providing an additional 250,000 places.
- Young people still unemployed after nine months on JSA will transfer to the Work Programme.
- Provide funding for an estimated 160,000 wage incentives of £2,275 to make it easier for private sector employers to take on young people
- Ensure the funding for at least 40,000 incentive payments for small firms to take on young apprentices
- Fund a new £50 million a year programme to provide support to some of the most disadvantaged 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) .
- Flexibility into the Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) regime to enable claimants after six months or more to be referred to full-time training for up to eight weeks whilst remaining on JSA.

**Source:** Social Welfare Training Newsletter.

## PIP: second revised draft of proposed assessment criteria published

Following feedback it received through its summer consultation, the DWP has published a second, revised draft of its proposed Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessment criteria. Building “heavily on the views of disabled people and their organisations” the Department maintains that this second draft enables “a fairer assessment of an individual’s ability to participate than the initial draft”.

From 2013, PIP will replace DLA for people of working age (between 16 and 64 years of age). The initial proposals for the PIP assessment criteria were published in May 2011 to provide an opportunity for disabled people and their organisations to comment and help to shape the development process. Between May and August the DWP says it met with around 60 disabled people and their organisations as well as receiving 173 written submissions from both organisations and individuals as part of an informal consultation. In addition, a testing exercise across the UK between May and September was carried out using the proposed assessment involving about 1000 volunteers across the UK.

## Proposed PIP assessment changes

As a result of this feedback and engagement, among the key proposed PIP assessment changes are:

- to ensure that the assessment adequately takes account of where the presence of another person is needed, the criteria now refer to supervision from another person where this is required to enable an individual to carry out an activity safely (similar to the DLA approach)
- while PIP activity descriptors continue to be considered in light of whether they apply for the “majority of the time” (the majority of days), to ensure that the impact of a fluctuating condition is accurately captured, where two or more descriptors in an activity apply on less than 50% of days individually but reach this threshold when combined, the descriptor which applies for the greatest proportion of time will apply
- to ensure a broader assessment of ability to make everyday decisions, the previous “Planning and buying food and drink activity” has been replaced
- with the new activity “Making financial decisions” – one of DA’s suggestions which we’re pleased to see included
- the previous “Communicating with others” activity has been split into two new activities: “Communicating” and “Engaging socially” with the former focusing on expressive and receptive communication and accessing written information while the latter assess ability to interact with others in a contextually and appropriate manner, understand body language and establish relationships
- a number of the definitions used within the criteria have been broadened, for example, a “simple meal” is now one made only from fresh ingredients, not frozen; medication and therapy may now be recommended as well as prescribed; and communication support can be from a person experienced in communicating with the individual, as well as from someone who is trained to provide such support
- to ensure that the assessment does not unfairly penalise individuals who choose to use aids and appliances to improve their independence, the assessment now also considers “cheap, widely available aids and appliances” which can “reasonably be expected” to be used, in a similar way to DLA.

## New proposed PIP activities tests

It is still proposed that PIP will have two components: a daily living component and a mobility component. Each component has two rates:

- daily living component standard rate – if you have a limited ability to carry out daily living activities; and a daily living component enhanced rate – if you have a severely limited ability to carry out daily living activities (this contrasts with the

DLA low rate care which will not be replicated under current Government plans);

- mobility component standard rate – if you have a limited ability to carry out mobility activities; and mobility component enhanced rate – if you have a severely limited ability to carry out mobility activities.

People with a terminal illness will automatically receive the daily living component enhanced rate and will not have to satisfy the period condition for the mobility component.

In order to qualify for any component of PIP you will have to attain a certain number of points in relation to certain activities in the test. It is now proposed that these should be:

- Preparing food and drink
- Taking nutrition
- Managing therapy or monitoring a health condition
- Bathing and grooming
- Managing toilet needs or incontinence
- Dressing and undressing
- Communicating
- Engaging socially
- Making financial decisions
- Planning and following a journey
- Moving around

The activities 'Planning and following a journey' and 'Moving around' are used in the test for mobility component of PIP. All the other activities are used in the test for the daily living component.

### **Weighting of PIP descriptors**

Each activity has a set of descriptors. Points are awarded on the basis of your limitations with respect to each activity.

The second draft of the assessment criteria now includes the DWP's initial proposals on possible weighting of descriptors that it says are "crucial" to get right and that it "to enable a meaningful debate" although it maintains that it does not have firm views on the entitlement thresholds for the rates and components for the benefit.

## Assessment of PIP

The new DWP document does not consider the delivery of PIP assessments but only considers the revised draft assessment criteria. However, the DWP does make clear the following:

- for all claims, decisions on entitlement will involve consideration of evidence from a range of sources – such as professionals involved in supporting the individual and of course from the individual themselves
- individuals' claims for the benefit and supporting evidence will be considered by an independent assessor, probably a health professional, working on behalf of a third party supplier and the DWP has recently begun a tendering exercise to identify the third party supplier.

The assessor will provide advice to a Departmental decision maker who will make the final decision on entitlement to the new benefit, using all the available evidence. Both the assessor and the Departmental decision maker “will have appropriate training, guidance and support to carry out their roles effectively” which will be developed following consultation with disabled people and their organizations.

Most individuals will have a face-to-face consultation with an assessor as part of a claim/ Decisions on where a face-to-face consultation would not be appropriate will be made on a case-by-case and this is likely to apply to individuals with the most severe impairments, or where enough evidence is already held to determine entitlement; and individuals will be able to bring another person such as a family member, friend, carer or advocate with them to the face-to-face consultation, where they would find this helpful.

DWP has said it will launch a formal consultation on the revised PIP assessment criteria at the beginning of 2012 to be completed in Spring 2012.

**Source:** Disability Alliance

## PIP: “the most blatant corruption of the social model of disability”

The government’s proposals concerning the assessment framework for the new Personal Independence Payment (PIP) are “perhaps the most blatant corruption of the social model of disability”, according to a new Viewpoint discussion paper published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF).

*Rethinking Disability Policy*, is written by Jenny Morris, a former member of the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit and the Office for Disability Issues. In it she contends that there are aspects of the arguments made by disability organisations which have been capitalised on by the politics and ideology driving recent and current policies in ways that are significantly to the disadvantage of disabled people.

For further information read – ‘Rethinking Disability Policy’ [www.jrf.org.uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk)

## Applying new single HMRC definition of charity

HM Revenue and Customs has produced draft orders that will apply a new single definition of a charity, charitable company and charitable trust across all UK charity tax relief and exemptions, due for April 2012.

Currently the new definition, set out in Part 1 of Schedule 6 to the Finance Act 2010, only applies to gift aid, and includes the 'fit and proper person' rule. See Civil Society Media news item at <http://www.civilsociety.co.uk/finance/news/content/11065/>, or go to the consultation documents at <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities/draft-legislation.htm>, deadline 20 January .

## Further examination for charity law

Civil Society Media reports that the Law Commission has indicated plans to examine charity legislation after Lord Hodgson has concluded his review of the Charities Act, and there may even be another draft charities bill produced in 2015. More from <http://www.civilsociety.co.uk/governance/news/content/11026/>

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# Employment

## Pension auto-enrolment

Employers with less than fifty staff won't have to implement automatic pension scheme enrolment until May 2015, rather than the previously announced April 2014. A revised schedule will appear early in the New Year, but the largest employers will still see the new requirements come in from October 2012. Out-law.com has more at <http://preview.tinyurl.com/cn6k3b5>

## Employing a PA?

ARC has a network for PAs and those who employ PAs (460 people in total). We have written a short guide to employing a new PA in the form of a toolkit, funded by Skills for Care and available on their website ([www.panet.org.uk](http://www.panet.org.uk)) and ours ([arcuk.org.uk](http://arcuk.org.uk)). There is lots of advice, from sample adverts through to sample letters of appointment, contracts and even Health & Safety policy. It also talks about supervision and developing/training your new PA.

ARC has also just finished a PA Induction pack, designed to be delivered by the employer, and has secured some further funding from Skills for Care to support and prepare a small number of PA Employers to use the pack. We will be recording the employers learning needs, in order to help them deliver a good induction, then developing a learning pack for the Employers, so that they can use it to prepare themselves to deliver a good induction in the future.

**Source:** National Family Carer Network Bulletin

## Preparing for winter employment issues

Employment advisory body Acas has a reminder for employers on making sure they are prepared for workplace issues that crop up over the winter months, such as adverse weather and holiday entitlements.  
<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=3554>

## Updated HSE information around new and expectant mothers

The Health and Safety Executive has updated its information for employers (and employees) on new and expectant mothers. What are your responsibilities and what must you do to comply with the law?  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/mothers/index.htm>

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## Policy and Campaigns

### Government set to reverse its decision to scrap the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance

Tens of thousands of disabled people in care homes have won a reprieve over planned benefit cuts after a high-profile campaign supported by Scope and many other disability organisations.

At the end of last month, Maria Miller, the Minister for Disabled People, announced that the mobility component for Disability Living Allowance would not be scrapped for people living in residential care as previously planned. This is because the Government could find no evidence for an overlap in funding - the principle reason that had been given for plans to remove the benefit.

The announcement follows months of campaigning by disabled people, disabled people's organisations and disability charities. It means that disabled people living in state-funded residential care needn't fear being prisoners in their own homes.

Although there are still many concerns around changes proposed in the Welfare Reform Bill, this decision can be seen as a major campaign victory for disability campaigners whose efforts have helped to safeguard the independence of thousands.

If you'd like to find out more about Scope campaigns please email [campaigns@scope.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@scope.org.uk) or call 0207 619 7370

### Research Project - Manchester Metropolitan University - Resilience in the lives of disabled people across the life course

Researchers at Manchester Metropolitan University are working together with Scope on a new research project: Resilience in the lives of disabled people across the life course. We want to find out what builds resilience in the lives of disabled people. We hope that our findings will help to shape the kinds of services that are delivered for disabled people, so that in the future, services always help disabled people to build resilience and independence.

We would like to interview:

- disabled children;
- disabled young people;
- parents/carers of disabled children;
- disabled people of working age;
- older disabled people;

- people with terminal and degenerative conditions.

Interviews usually last between 1 - 2 hours; you can choose where you would like to be interviewed. Questions we ask might include:

What enables people to fulfil their hopes and dreams? Can you identify people and services that have you have found helpful? Why were they helpful? What helps disabled children and families to persevere in life even when things are getting tough?

If you would like more information about this project, please contact:

[k.runswick-cole@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:k.runswick-cole@mmu.ac.uk)

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## Items of interest

### Professor Harrington: Reform still needed but WCA Has “noticeably changed for the better”

In his second annual independent report on the Work Capability Assessment Professor Malcolm Harrington maintains that the WCA has “noticeably changed for the better” while acknowledging that there is still further to go with some of the improvements from his first Review not having reached all parts of DWP Operations.

In his new Review, Professor Harrington proposes a number of detailed recommendations to improve further the process of the WCA and the criteria used to determine eligibility for ESA.

For further information see - An Independent Review of the Work Capability Assessment: year two and the Government’s response. Both available on [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk)

### Facilitation Fund (England)

As part of its announcement, that the Government has awarded £116,473 million to 13 Disabled People’s User-Led Organisations (DPULO) to be a representative voice for disabled people and deliver better services, the government has also announced that it is seeking funding for applications from disability organisations through its Facilitation Fund.

The Facilitation Fund is designed for DPULOs to bid for modest amounts of

money to fund specific projects and to improve their sustainability. It is anticipated that the typical grant will be in the region of £10,000 or £30,000 over the duration of the whole programme (ie until March 2015).

Examples of activities / projects that can be supported include:

- Training
- strengthen the role of DPULOs in the local community
- funding DPULOs to run enterprise schemes to generate income
- radio or press promotion
- equipment essential to the running of DPULOs. This includes updating computers below the £1,000 capital threshold and other potential capital assets below £5,000 (as per DWP's Capitalisation Policy); etc.

Applications to the Facilitation Fund can be submitted at any time.

<http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/odi-projects/user-led-organisations.php/>

## Government finance announcements

See Autumn Statement in the News section for pension auto-enrolment and VAT on shared services. Tables confirming tax and tax credit rates and thresholds for 2012-13 can be downloaded (pdf, 56KB) from

[http://cdn.hm-treasury.gov.uk/as2011\\_rates\\_and\\_thresholds\\_201213.pdf](http://cdn.hm-treasury.gov.uk/as2011_rates_and_thresholds_201213.pdf)

## New report reveals how cuts and confusion push disabled people into poverty

- Confusion reigns as disabled people struggle to make sense of government welfare reforms
- Calls for government to have a clear communication strategy for those affected by benefit changes

Ahead of the annual international celebration of the achievements of disabled people, a new report reveals how disabled families are left baffled by 18 months of constant benefit changes. In some cases the cuts and ensuing confusion are pushing people over the edge and deeper in to poverty.

Destination Unknown: Autumn 2011 (PDF document, 741KB), the second report in a two-year longitudinal study by the think tank Demos, finds that the Government's failure to adequately explain and communicate changes to recent

to welfare benefits and administrative mistakes have left disabled people in a 'no man's land' between the current system and the new Universal Credit that is due to come into effect in 2013. The report comes ahead of International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December.

As benefit cuts bite, local services close and the cost of living rises, disabled people have reported that they are struggling to make ends meet, cannot make sense of the situation and are very uncertain about their future.

One of the people featured in the tracker study, funded by the disability charity Scope, disposed of their savings because they wrongly believed that if they had any they would not be eligible for state-funded social care. Another did not know that Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) had been introduced, let alone about the changes limiting receipt of some elements of the benefit to 12 months.

Scope is calling on the Government to take control of the situation, outline the rationale for its changes and make sure people who are affected understand what is happening.

The Government's welfare reforms, which will result in one of the case studies in the report evicted from their home of 10 years, raises wider questions about the future of the welfare state as the 'safety net' that disabled people rely on to live their lives begins to unravel.

The report found that, as the state pulls back its support, disabled people are looking elsewhere – to charities, emergency grants, employers support schemes and community – for financial support. Yet these alternatives are disappearing or unable to cope with the increase in demand.

One of the disabled families in the study has already been refused support after the charity they had relied on has been "inundated" with demand. Another has found her local advice service is under the threat of closure.

Claudia Wood, Head of Public Services and Welfare at Demos said:

"Last spring, we described welfare reform going through a period of calm before the storm. Now, six months on, the storm has well and truly arrived. As well as a reduction in benefits – some totalling as much as £800 – the human cost of austerity is becoming ever more clear. Disabled people are being left in the dark regarding their entitlements, facing escalating debt, repossession and mental health problems as a result of the stress and uncertainty of constantly battling to secure the support they are entitled to. This is not a smooth transition to a new system and not without victims.

"Worse still, these families are trying to look for alternatives to state support, but

are finding community and third sector services are struggling with cuts themselves and can provide one-off help at best. Many of the families in the study really have come to the end of the line financially.”

Richard Hawkes, Chief Executive of disability charity Scope, said:

“This alarming report shows just how hard the Government’s welfare reforms have hit disabled people.

“Times are tough are for everyone, but the daily battle that disabled people face to get the support they need in the face of cuts to welfare benefits and services and misinformation could push many into poverty.

“Disabled people and their families have been left in a no man’s land between the current welfare system, which itself is in a state of flux, and the introduction of the new-style Universal Credit system in over three years’ time. The Government urgently needs to take control of the situation and develop and implement a clear strategy to tell disabled people what they are doing and why.

“It’s also becoming clear that these welfare reforms raise very important questions about the future of the welfare state and what will happen to disabled people as they are separated from the support they need to live their lives.”

The next in the series of Destination Unknown tracker studies of six disabled households, researchers found that some disabled households have lost as much as £800 since April (over £100 per month) due to changes to welfare provision.

**Source:** Scope Website [www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk)

## Campaign to preserve charity archives

Concerns about inadequate legal protection for voluntary sector archives, together with recent stories of the loss and destruction of the records of voluntary organisations, have led the Voluntary Action History Society to launch a campaign on the issue. Their article at <http://www.vahs.org.uk/2011/11/charity-archives-brewis-weeden/> starts "We cannot write the history of Britain without recourse to the records of voluntary organisations". Campaign page at <http://www.vahs.org.uk/archives/>

## Trust in charities proves volatile

Research from sector consultants nfpSynergy has found that trust in charities has gone down significantly since May 2010, but has rallied from a low in January 2011. The level of swings in trust are second only to banks. See news item at

<http://www.civilsociety.co.uk/fundraising/news/content/11019/> or the full details from nfpSynergy at <http://preview.tinyurl.com/d45uqr7>

## Community enterprise fund for Wales

The Welsh Assembly Government has announced a Communities Investment Fund to provide finance of up to £250,000, primarily through flexible loans, to local organisations and social enterprises. The fund will invest in organisations to develop trading activities by supporting the purchase or improvement of buildings, equipment and other community business ideas. See WCVA item at [http://www.wcva.org.uk/news/dsp\\_news.cfm?newsid=1763](http://www.wcva.org.uk/news/dsp_news.cfm?newsid=1763)

## A day with a data expert

Up to ten charities could get a day's worth of help from a data expert provided via the Nominet Trust. This would take the charity through what they could be doing with all the open data that is available, and the data which the charity holds itself. It would also be an opportunity to think about what kinds of information you could be collecting: to improve your services, attract more funding or campaign for issues which are important to your community. From NCVO item at <http://preview.tinyurl.com/btj97ne>

Note that Nominet Trust's website is due to be revamped today (1st December), <http://www.nominettrust.org.uk> Any data geeks reading this, see <http://preview.tinyurl.com/caw2u3n>

## A Positive Approach to Risk & Personalisation

This paper, commissioned by the West Midlands Joint Improvement Partnership (JIP) provides a framework for Councils in shifting the balance away from risk aversion towards supported positive risk taking. The aim is to share risk between the individual using services (regardless of funding source), their family, carers, professional care staff, third parties and the Council.

Jay Dobson, Personal Health Budgets Lead for the West Midlands Strategic Health Authority has provided advice to ensure that the framework is relevant to personalised care planning, personal health budgets or direct payments in health. The framework is equally valuable to organisations developing a single assessment framework and/or joint care/support plans across health and social care. Documents:

[Risk and personalisation: A framework \(pdf - 602Kb\) \(opens new window\)](#)

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

## Think Local, Act Personal's response to Alzheimer's Society report

"Think Local Act Personal welcomes the Alzheimer's Society report Getting Personal - Making Personal Budgets work for People with Dementia and have already spoken to the Society about its implications.

"The report adds evidence to a key part of our recent report Personal Budgets: Taking Stock and Moving Forward that identified some groups are not yet sufficiently benefiting from personal budgets. A key line in the report is "The evidence shows that there are clear benefits to people with dementia and carers using direct payments, but that accessing and using them can also be a big burden".

"The paper provides good ideas and approaches for improvement for councils and other organisations.

"Think Local Act Personal will shortly establish a national self-directed support forum to gather and share intelligence and good practice to promote improvement in the implementation of self-directed support. In doing this, we will work with the Alzheimer's Society to identify and resolve obstacles faced by people with dementia and ensure their findings are well shared.

"We see it as a positive sign that Jeremy Hughes, CEO of Alzheimer's Society has been appointed co-lead for the personalisation strand of the Caring for Our Future White Paper engagement exercise and are confident he will ensure that the needs of groups not fully benefiting both from personal budgets and wider approaches to personalisation will be heard."

Related links: [Alzheimer' Society website: Getting personal](#)

**Source:** Think Personal Act Local

## Resources on impact measurement and reporting

New from Third Sector Research Centre, 'Social impact measurement as an entrepreneurial process' looks at why organisations embark on social impact measurement, what guides their decisions about how to measure this impact, and how they use the results. Download the report (pdf, 107KB) or read the press release via <http://preview.tinyurl.com/csvemx5>

# Cracking charity management jargon

The Charities Evaluation Service has created a Jargonbusters website covering terms used in evaluation, monitoring, impact measurement etc.

There's a Guardian article 'Charity jargon: Lets all speak the same language' at <http://preview.tinyurl.com/d5fs8n4>, or go direct to <http://www.jargonbusters.org.uk>

## Keep warm and healthy in the winter

The Government, Age UK and the Met Office have launched cold weather initiatives aimed at keeping vulnerable people warm and healthy in the winter. The focus is on helping the most vulnerable by:

- making an extra £10 million available to support existing Government schemes for those at risk of fuel poverty
- creating a new £20 million fund – supported by Age UK – for local authorities and charities to address cold housing
- launching a Cold Weather Plan – which will be jointly run with the Met Office and Health Protection Agency – to advise individuals, communities and agencies on how to prepare for and respond to severe cold weather
- providing information on all aspects of keeping safe and well in winter online via the Getting Ready for Winter pages of the Directgov website.

The Cold Weather Plan is available @ [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)

The Getting Ready for Winter website pages are available @ [www.directgov.uk](http://www.directgov.uk)

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## Training

### Disability Alliance Tribunal Support Unit (TSU)

The Tribunal Support Unit offers training and specialist support for first-tier advice organisations. It supports advisers assisting claimants who are appealing to the First Tier Tribunal or the Upper Tribunal and can provide free advice, information and practical support through all stages of the decision-making and appeals systems.

**TSU advice line** - The telephone advice line is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10am-12pm and 2-4pm on 0207 1010 397. Or email Keith Venables at [kvenables@disabilityalliance.org](mailto:kvenables@disabilityalliance.org) providing as much detail

as possible about your case. We can also meet with London-based advisors to discuss difficult cases in detail.

## NCVO Annual Conference

With year two of the public funding cuts close approaching we will be looking at how we can help the sector move forward by providing you with practical skills, resources and support to help your organisation to continue to move forward in an uncertain future.

Learn from practical workshops and inspiring speakers that will reinvigorate and inspire you and your staff to move forward in these challenging times.

Prices start from £157.50. Find out more and book your place at [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/annualconference2012](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/annualconference2012) or contact NCVO events on 020 7520 3153.

## An Introduction to Raiser's Edge

Technology, Comms Course London

Start: 09/02/2012 09:00

End: 09/02/2012 12:00

A team from Purple Vision will host this training session. The course is aimed at individuals or students who are new or returning to the voluntary sector, and will give delegates an opportunity to find out what it's like to work in fundraising. This course is suitable for anyone who has recognised that having experience on a main database within the sector (Raiser's Edge) gives them a head start. The course will include the following sessions, and will cost £45.

If you are interested in signing up for it – please go to eventbrite via the following link. <http://raisersedgetraining-eorg.eventbrite.com/>

Source: Social Welfare Training - <http://voluntarynews.org.uk/news/event/listing>

## Publications

New ESA test will affect everyone on incapacity benefits  
2nd edition out now

**Stay informed – know your rights**

The introduction of this benefit has not gone smoothly and appeals have increased fourfold since March 2009.

Our 2nd edition explains:

- The migration process for existing claimants
- The claim process for new claimants and the new WCA which determines entitlement
- Eligibility rules and the conditions that must be met to continue to claim
- The impact ESA has on other benefits and details of financial help if your claim is unsuccessful
- How decisions are made and how to challenge a decision

**58 pages**

**£10.00** post free per copy

**£5.50** for people on benefits

Available from Disability Alliance.

## A guide to help you make a successful claim for DLA or AA

### A guide to making a successful claim.

Written for disabled people considering making a claim, this is also an invaluable tool for professionals who advise disabled people. This straightforward guide:

- Explains the benefits: disability living allowance and attendance allowance
- Describes the qualifying conditions.
- Takes you through the claim process and provides tips on completing the claim-forms
- Shows how best to present evidence about a condition
- Describes how decisions are made and what steps to take if you are not happy with a decision

**32 pages**

**£8.00** post free per copy

**£3.00** for people on benefits

Available from Disability Alliance – [www.disabilityalliance.org](http://www.disabilityalliance.org)

## Charity Commission

The Charity Commission has issued a special edition of its 'CC News' focused on the Commission's new strategy and structure. A full strategy document will be published later this year. Available in pdf, web (html) and MP3 versions via <http://preview.tinyurl.com/2aklwzj>

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## Useful websites

**Disability Alliance** – [disabilityalliance.org](http://disabilityalliance.org)

**Social Welfare Training** – [www.socialwelfaretraining.co.uk](http://www.socialwelfaretraining.co.uk)

**Think Local Act Personal** – [www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk](http://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk)

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## Other matters

### 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.

We welcome views on this newsletter – does it meet your needs? What would you like to see less of, or more of? Do you like the pdf or hard copy format, or would an email with links to articles on the web suit you better? Please send any comments to [response@scope.org.uk](mailto:response@scope.org.uk).