

# Democracy Disability News Brought to you by the DDS Group

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Take a look at what were up to!

Catch up with our work at the DDS group and find out what we're up to next!

Why Not Come Along Join up with us in our work!

## Stop the bus we want on:

Since the introduction of low floor buses in Edinburgh, passengers using wheelchairs have struggled to get on the bus and take their space reserved for elderly or disabled people. Many other passengers who can sit anywhere on the bus have been using this rather nice space for shopping, buggies and to just stand. Elderly and disabled people are often left at the

stop, Despite letter of complaint to Lothian buses no action seems to be forthcoming by the bus company. You should write to them if you have had any problems using the buses, please send the DDS a copy for our records.



Lothian buses, one of the most modern fleets in the UK, wheelchairs users are still left at stops!

### MASTER CLASS

#### DDS attend master class at nursery school!

Members recently went back to nursery school, Our group member's George and Eleanor went with our social work student to visited the local nurseries. We wanted to draw attention to the difficulties wheelchair users face when someone has a buggy in the only space suitable to wheelchair users trying to use the bus. The parents also had an opportunity to share with us the difficulties they also face using Lothian buses.

## Taxi complaint guide

Would you know how to complain if you had problems whilst trying to use a taxi? The DDS group can send out

a guide produced by Edinburgh City Council telling you exactly what steps you need to take to help you complain.

The DDS group hope that you will use the guide to help you make a complaint. If you need another copy just contact us at the DDS Group.

## Condition of Pavements cracking wheelchair users up

We have been contacted in recent weeks by disabled people living and working in Craigmillar complaining about the condition of pavements, paths and kerbs. Many pavements are cracked and kerbs too high for wheelchair users to negotiate safely. We would urge you to report the condition of

any dangerous pavements or kerbs to the Local Council or call Clarence the roads and highway agency. Contact the City Council on 0131 200 2000 You can also contact Clarence free by



calling Free-phone

0800 23 23 23

**Remember it will not cost you anything to call.**

Also tell us at the DDS group if you complain and of any response from the council.

## Disability Rights Commission latest news

**DRC lawyers win top legal award.**

Staff at the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) in Scotland are celebrating today after their "remarkable victory" on behalf of a Fife council worker earned them a prestigious legal award.

Disabled Kelty woman Susan Archibald finally won her long-running legal battle against employers Fife Council after the DRC successfully took her case to the House of Lords. After the law Lords' unanimous decision in her favour, Fife Council later conceded that they had discriminated against Mrs

Archibald when they dismissed her and she was awarded almost £18,000.

### Democracy comment

This is truly a landmark case which demonstrates that regardless of what sector you discriminate from, public, private or voluntary the law under the 1995 DDA is going to catch you

## British Council Of Disabled People win massive funding award!

**A lottery grant of nearly £150,000 will boost efforts by disabled people's groups to fight for their rights.**

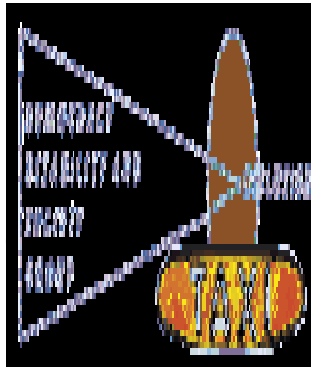
The award of £144,857 from the Big Lottery Fund will help the British Council of Disabled People (BCODP) support its 130 member groups. Two new members of staff, supported by volunteers, will

offer support and training on politics and law. Generating income and running their organisation. Anne Pridmore, acting chair of the BCODP, said she was "over the moon" with the award.

Get involved share your views, campaign for your rights!

## Group win award to provide FREE disability training across Craigmillar

The Craigmillar Partnership CHAGG group awarded the DDS group a grant to provide free disability equality training to Community groups across the Craigmillar area. The award will help anyone volunteering on a project Management board or Committee to get the latest information on the Disability Discrimination Act and to learn about disability issues with our disability equality training. The DDS



Group expect to provide training to around 260 individuals volunteering in these settings throughout the next 12 months. Soon information on how to get in “on the Act” will be sent out to Organizations and Projects. A spokesperson for the DDS group said; “it is really important that

Committees and Boards learn about the duties imposed on them by the 1995 DDA” Part iv Access to Good & Services. Organisations surviving on tight budgets can not afford to fall foul of this legislation as any legal action could prove to be very costly not to mention reputations being at stake”. The DDS group hope this training will help these Organisations to limit any potential liability and ensure that they comply with these new duties, whilst getting some basic information on Disability issues.

## We are the Democracy Disability & Society Group!

The DDS group started up in 2000, The aim was simple help disabled people without a voice living in and around the Thistle Foundation to voice their opinions and to learn about disability issues together.

After the first two or three meetings it was clear that a need for a group like ours was needed. Early members joining the group required confidence building and participated in group work skills workshops to help with speaking up. Within a few months a group agenda started to emerge. Disability and

Transport seemed to be the biggest issue of interest with the group and before long plans to take a look at transport issues were in place. The group called in many different people to support them in this task, and started to put in place a plan on how they wanted to tackle the issues in the coming months. Some of the work included a transport conference and designing a taxi-driver training website. All the group work can be seen on our website at, [www.ddsg.org.uk/home](http://www.ddsg.org.uk/home)

“Our group works hard to remove the barriers in society that affect

**disabled** People. Our values are underpinned by the models of inclusion. We know that disabled people working together can improve the structures in society that affect us all, and help us all to contribute.

**Our group posted to the 32 Scottish Councils copies of our driver training CD. We hope this makes a difference to driver training and customer service for disabled people.**

## Democracy Disability & Society Group

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Working together towards inclusion

We are on the web  
[www.ddsg.org.uk](http://www.ddsg.org.uk)

The DDS Group is supported by:



## Our program until December 2005

All our meetings start with DDS business then go onto learning opportunities & group training at each meeting

**August 9th & 15th: Chairing the meetings training**

**September 6th & 20th: Report writing training**

**October: 4th & 18th: budget & Book-keeping training**

**November : 1st & 15th Website maintenance & building**

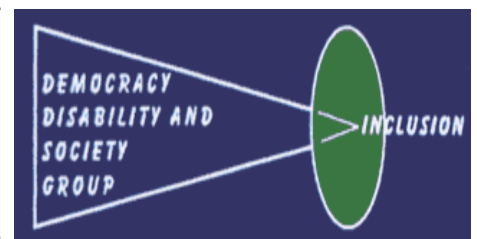
**November : 29th: Session review and planning workshop**

**December : 13th & 20 Further planning**

## **E7 Taxi not getting to hit the road! Say Edinburgh City Council!**

Since 2004 the DDS have been campaigning to get a new taxi licensed in the City of Edinburgh, The E7 is built and distributed by a Scottish Company. The Company has spend large amounts of money to get the Taxi EEC compliant only to be told by the City Of Edinburgh Council that it is still unsuitable. Edinburgh & London are the only two cities in the UK not to approve this vehicle. Last year the DDS group tested the vehicle and reported on

it's suitability to the full council committee by sending a deputation to the meeting, 2 other deputations have taken place with the vehicle still not approved. Our members views are; **"This Taxi offers superb space for wheelchair users and is very comfortable. You can also travel with family and friends"** **WHY are we still waiting for a taxi designed for the 21st century that we can all use?**



The DDS group meet every second Tuesday in the evening, contact us for more information about meeting dates, all our meetings are supported by a BSL interpreter, A literacy support worker and a facilitator. **All welcome to come along and take part in our meeting!**