

Link

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Editor's Note

The right to choose

Two of the accusations levelled at those who are opposed to David Alton's Abortion Bill is that they are devaluing the lives of thousands of disabled people in this country and saying in effect that they should never have been born.

ASBAH and many other disability organisations and disabled people are opposed to David Alton's Bill and yet ASBAH fully supports the right of disabled people to a full and happy life. What it is defending is the right of parents to choose and whatever that informed choice is - whether for abortion or not - it will seek to advise and help that family as much as possible.

In an ideal world all pregnancies should be allowed to proceed and society should be committed to giving full and continued support - financial, moral, physical whatever is necessary to the family and the individual throughout life.

That this doesn't happen now is painfully clear, and David Alton's amendments seek to force all parents to go ahead with pregnancy and condemn some to great unhappiness and pain and in some cases near destruction of their own lives as well as break up of family life. They are left to go it alone except for a very little State help and as much help as voluntary organisations like ASBAH can give.

Some people cope and are willing to try and many disabled people enjoy reasonable and often very fulfilled lives and so do their families. But what of the others? Is it fair to take away the choice which medical advances have now given us?

ASBAH offers support to every family whatever their decision, and whilst encouraging independence and fulfilled lives for all disabled people, recognises the right to choose in this highly personal and sensitive area.

Sue Gearing, Editor

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FRONT COVER:

John, Mary and young Ben Gilbert of Werrington, near Peterborough. Both parents are in wheelchairs - Mary has spina bifida and is also deaf - and John was severely disabled in a motor cycle accident 14 years ago - but they manage to cope with their active two year old. Mary has always been determined to have two children and is well on the way to achieving it - this Spring she is expecting another baby. It is an appropriate front cover photo for this LINK which features an article on page 9 - "Can people with spina bifida have children?".

Photo: Peterborough Evening Telegraph

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Link is published by ASBAH (The Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus).

Contributions to LINK by way of letters, news, photographs, articles and opinions are warmly welcomed. The closing date for the May issue is April 18. Send to the Editor, Sue Gearing, at National Office

ASBAH'S SPRING CONFERENCE 1988

Southampton University
September 2-4

The general theme will be: The problems of young (and not so young) adults.

ASBAH is aware of the enormous difficulties that families face once the support of paediatric services is withdrawn, and the Conference will look at these problems and attempt to identify some solutions.

Further details about the programme and the Conference cost will be circulated soon, and there will be more details in LINK as soon as possible.

Meanwhile please put this date in your diary. ASBAH would like to see as many members as possible at what should prove to be a stimulating and rewarding weekend.

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Whatever your ability
you are invited to.....

ASBAH'S MobilityWeekend

May 20-22

Ludwig Guttmann Sports
Centre, Stoke Mandeville

There will be a full range of activities for everyone whatever your ability.

The fee will be £50 approx.

More details from Clare Michelmore at National Office.

another

ASBAH STUDY DAY

In order to make full use of our time at the Ludwig Guttmann Sports Centre there will be a Study Day for parents there on May 20 during the day, before the start of the Mobility Weekend.

Full details from Denise Dunning at National Office



Opposition to Alton's Bill

At the lobby in Parliament by disabled people and disability organisations against David Alton's Bill in the week preceding the Second Reading, Daffyd Wigley, Labour MP, called for a legislative framework "that recognises the realities of life".

Mr Wigley who has himself lost two children through a progressive disease, spoke of the suffering that many parents of disabled people go through and the increased suffering that would occur if they were denied informed choice the next time they decided to have a child.

He was one of many MPS who were at the Houses of Parliament to show their opposition to the Bill as it now stands, which seeks to reduce the legal time limit for abortion to 18 weeks.

ASBAH was there along with about 11 other disability organisations, including SATFA**. A total of about 150 people gathered in Central Hall Westminster and then proceeded to Parliament in an orderly fashion to lobby Ministers and to hear speeches by MPs, parents and others against the proposed Bill.

Gavin Campbell of TV's *That's Life* was one who spoke, having met many parents, some of whose children had died in "excruciating circumstances" and he said he had seen families torn apart. "Why condemn someone to misery and pain. We must accept people on their terms".

Prof. Stuart Campbell, Professor of Obstetrics at King's

College, London said that termination was not an easy option and, in fact, in his department out of 200 abnormalities diagnosed last year, less than half had ended in termination. The Bill denied informed choice, he said.

He continued by agreeing with David Alton that having a disabled member of the family can be enriching, and many other speakers made the point that they were not devaluing the lives of people with disabilities.

Moyna Gilbertson, ASBAH's Executive Director spoke of the need to continue to press for improved services to help give disabled people a reasonable life.

Despite the lobbying and general opposition, the Second Reading was passed by a majority of 45. The Committee Stage is now proceeding and there are some signs that the Committee may consider increasing the legal time to 24 weeks - a move that would be welcomed by most people opposed to the 18 week limit as it would allow greater time for informed choice.

Other people who were at the lobby opposed to the Bill were Peter Thurnham, MP and Chairman of SATFA, Andrew McKay, MP, Rosie Barnes, MP, Jo Richardson, MP, Renee Short, MP, Gwyneth Dunwoody, MP, Audrey Wise, MP, Kypros Nicolaidis, Deputy Director of the Harriss Birthright Trust, King's College.

**SATFA was officially launched on January 19 - see page 20.

Nicholas Scott talks to ASBAH about the new Social Security arrangements

Let me know how the Act affects you says Minister

Talking to ASBAH Council members at their meeting at National ASBAH office in February, Nicholas Scott, Minister for Social Security and the Disabled, accepted that the new Social Security arrangements coming in on April 11 would need careful monitoring. He asked ASBAH members to let him know of any problems that arise and how the new arrangements affect them.

Mr Scott said the aim of the reforms was to bring in a more simple system and to get a more coherent and easily understood pattern of provision.

"That is not to say that there won't be difficulties. If we are to move away from the complexity of the old system and replace it by a new system, the pattern won't be the same". He estimated that about 80% of people would be virtually unaffected, some would be better off and some less well off. Later in his speech Mr Scott conceded that there would be a small number of severely disabled people who would be getting substantially less.



Nicholas Scott, (left) at ASBAH's Council Meeting with Robin Mackenzie, Chairman, and Moyna Gilbertson.

Referring to the Independent Living Fund which was announced in the Commons on February 9, the Minister said that the Government would be putting £5 million a year into the fund for at least the next three years. It is to be managed by the Disablement Income Group and the Scottish equivalent and will make payments to those very severely disabled people who need extensive help to live independently. The Family Fund Officers in York will be giving their experience and expertise he told ASBAH members. "I hope the Fund will be welcomed".

Before payments were made from the Fund, a personal

Continued on page 10

Working towards a full Fieldwork service

by Teresa Cole,
ASBAH's Fieldwork
Manager

This has been a particularly busy year for the Fieldwork Department. As the demand on the service increased daily it was agreed that a limited expansion be put into effect this year and we have been able to put Fieldworkers into some of the areas where a clear need has been obvious for some time.

The equivalent of four full-time Fieldworkers was budgeted for for 1987-88 and, as a result of this, we have been able to appoint two part-time Fieldworkers for Northern Ireland, Mrs June Kerr and Mrs Janet Davidson; a part-time Fieldworker for Devon, Mrs Wendy Rattray, and a part-time Fieldworker for Cornwall, Mrs Lynne Young.



Left to right: June Kerr and Janet Davidson, Northern Ireland



Left to right: Wendy Rattray, Devon, and Lynne Young, Cornwall.

Many people will remember the enormous amount of time and effort put in to creating a scheme for the Greater Manchester area some years ago which eventually had to be abandoned due to our inability to obtain

support from one of the major unions at that time. It was particularly pleasing, therefore, in January to be able to appoint a full-time Fieldworker for Greater Manchester, Mrs Jean Black, already well known to so many ASBAH members through her Chairmanship of Trafford and Salford Local Association.

Other changes

During the past year there have been other changes in the service. As you know, we have been very concerned about the workload we place on Fieldworkers on the large patches most of them try to cover. In one case we decided that the patch should be reduced without further delay and we, therefore, withdrew our Fieldwork service from Cumbria, except for contact by phone and letter, and began negotiations with the Social Services Department with a view to them considering joint funding of a replacement worker. Meantime, in view of our great concern for the families in the area, we have arranged for a part-time service to be resumed in Cumbria with Mrs Moira Foggo starting work in March.

In other parts of the country as Fieldworkers resigned or retired from ASBAH we took the opportunity to rethink their areas. For example, the North Yorkshire Fieldworker retired, and her replacement Mrs Julie Turnbull is now based at Sheffield. As many of the families live in Sheffield, Doncaster, Rotherham we hope that more of the travelling will be on short journeys rather than many of them being extensive days out on the road. The retired Fieldworker agreed to stay on our counselling register and she attends clinics at York for the under 16's and the new adult clinic which was opened last July.

When the Fieldworker for Norfolk resigned we also took the opportunity to change the base of operation. Mrs Mary Castle joined us on September 1

and is based at Cambridge. This should enable us to give support to families West of Cambridge, about whom there has been concern for some time.

Support will continue to be available to families in Norfolk, many of who live around the Norwich area, as the new Fieldworker's hours have been increased to 20 instead of the 10 for which the previous Fieldworker was appointed.

With the resignation of Pat Goss from West Sussex we again were able to make some changes in the way the patch operated. Valerie Hanna, her replacement, has been appointed to cover the whole of Sussex and has responsibility for the 16 plus age group. Sheila Wilkinson who is still with ASBAH now covers the whole of Sussex, but for the younger age group up to 16. We were sad to hear that Pam Dickinson the Fieldworker for Cheshire who has been with ASBAH for about 10 years was resigning to return to Canada for personal reasons. Again, we had an opportunity to reconsider the patch and we have appointed Mrs Elizabeth Lawlor who is based near Crewe. Many of the facilities are in that part of Cheshire and we hope that it will be possible to meet more of the families making shorter trips for most of the time, perhaps by setting up "surgeries" in a number of places for regular meetings.

Mrs Margaret Holmes has been appointed for the Bromley area for 10 hours per week from March 1.

Two other part-time posts for 12 hours each have been made available in areas not previously effectively covered by a Fieldworker based in the area. We have appointed Mrs Mary White who lives in Derbyshire, she will cover parts of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Most recently we have appointed Mrs Tricia Pope to

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Education

The Education Reform Bill was introduced into the House of Commons on November 20 1987. The Government's anticipated timetable is that the Bill will reach Lords Committee Stage April/May 1988; early June Lords Report Stage, and, eventually, end June/early July, 1988, Royal Assent.

The proposed reforms come under five main headings:

- *National curriculum*
- *More open enrolment*
- *Financial delegation to schools*
- *Grant maintained schools*
- *City technology colleges*

The aims of these reforms are to:

- propose major changes in the way schools are organised and managed;
- strengthen the involvement of parents and the local community;
- provide for the introduction of a national curriculum for school children, with regular assessments of their performance;

The National Curriculum

It will consist of:

- three core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science and seven other foundation subjects, such as History, Geography, a modern foreign language, art, music, physical education and technology;
- national arrangements to assess what pupils have learned, adhered to attainment targets, will take the form of tests at ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16.

The amount of time spent on studying foundation subjects will not be laid down by law. It is up to each school to decide what subjects will be studied and for how long.

It is proposed that a new, independent council will be established to monitor the new curriculum and advise on curriculum development.

Testing

It is proposed that parents will be informed about programmes of

Reform

Bill

By Denise Dunning, ASBAH's Education, Training and Employment Co-ordinator

study and attainment targets.

The purpose of assessment, including tests, is to ensure that parents and teachers know how well children are doing against attainment targets. The idea behind this is that better decisions can be made about the sort of future study programme to be undertaken by the pupils' concerned.

Finance

Schools with over 200 pupils will be given responsibility for their own budget. The delegation of control over schools budgets from local education authorities will be given to governing bodies and heads of the schools.

Smaller primary schools and special schools can be given smaller responsibilities if that is thought best locally.

Grant Maintained Schools

Any maintained secondary or primary school with at least 300 pupils will be able to opt out of local authority control and apply to the Government to be grant maintained. The Government is saying that the establishment of Grant Maintained Schools, will increase the choice within the State Sector of Education. It is proposed that grant maintained schools should still retain their character, ie if the school is a comprehensive, it will remain a comprehensive.

Children With Special Needs

Obviously, it is of concern to parents with children of special educational needs how these new proposals will affect their children.

The Government, says it is commit-

ted to the principals of integration laid down by the 1981 Act. If a child has a statement of special educational needs then the curriculum may be modified to meet that child's needs.

However, there are matters for concern. If children do not have a statement of special education needs, (and bearing in mind that there is a backlog in some LEA's, in completing the statementing procedure) it may well be that these children's needs will be overlooked, particularly if they are in mainstream schools.

On age-relating testing some children with special needs may fare badly, and although the tests may identify the areas for concern, it is doubtful whether the appropriate support for these children will be provided.

It is also important that children with special educational needs have subjects such as independence training, daily and social living skills incorporated in their curriculum, and it remains to be seen whether or not the curriculum, will be modified to embrace these.

As individual schools become more "budget" conscious, it may mean that mainstream schools will be reluctant to take on children with special educational needs because it will entail spending more money to accommodate these children by providing appropriate resources.

The older group

There is concern that the New Bill does not establish a statutory basis for those young people over 16 who have special needs.

Because of the delegation of financial powers to individual colleges, there is no guarantee that young people with disabilities will be catered for, because of the cost of providing appropriate services.

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Education Reform Bill

Continued from page 7

The National Bureau for Handicapped Students has lobbied MP's and submitted amendments to the Bill which, amongst others, includes the provision that people with special educational needs up to the age of 26 & recently disabled people have the same rights to education as all others have up to 19.

The New City Technical Colleges

The City Technical Colleges which are being establishing will receive grants only if they follow the substance of the national curriculum.

These colleges are being funded by the Government, and private sponsors, and will be run by independent bodies (not LEAs). The first of these

colleges will be opened at Kingshurst, Birmingham in September 1988, and the Government is proposing that children of all abilities may apply for places (if they live within the catchment area of a C.T.C.). Emphasis will be on Technology, Science and Mathematics; and, in particular training in skills to meet the demands of industry and commerce.

It has taken some time for the spirit of the 1981 Act, to be fulfilled and in many parts of the country, parents still continue to fight for the educational provision they think their child needs. Let us hope that this new bill will not destroy what has been achieved, but, most important of all, that children with special education needs do not suffer.

Disabled Persons Act

ACT NOW!

The Disabled Persons Act received the Royal Assent in July 1986. Where is it now? If you want to know, and wish to keep in touch with developments a good move would be to send for a free copy of the Act Now Campaign News.

It has been produced by the Act Now Steering Committee made up of representatives from over 35 voluntary organisations including ASBAH. It was set up to press for the full implementation of the Disabled Persons Act. The principal tasks of David Parratt who has been appointed Project Officer is to work at 'local level' to get the Act implemented. He is already in contact with senior staff in the Social Services Departments of 11 local authorities.

For further information about ACT Now please contact David at RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London WIN 8AB. Tel: 01 6376 5400. For a copy of the News contact Susan Eastoe at the same address.

S.V. NIPPI

Illustrated is the award winning S.V. NIPPI designed and manufactured by Special Vehicle Designs Limited which is now available in the new range of 1988 colours, together with an improved 50cc model capable of speeds of up to 30 m.p.h. The design remains simple but functionally well suited to its purpose. Well established and reliable scooter components have been adapted to form a motor tricycle combining a rugged safety frame with attractive bodywork. It can be driven from a normal pillion seat, but its more likely use is from a wheelchair. The central well is big enough to take a wheelchair up to 27" overall width, and entry is made by a ramp/tailgate at the rear, and the chair locks securely into place in a simple clamp.

Many adaptations are now available to meet the specific requirements of different disabilities, such as push brakes, left hand throttle amongst others.

This versatile vehicle is living up to its name, with all the characteristics of a normal motor scooter, but with the added security and stability of three wheels. The basic model has an engine just under 50cc and as such is classed as a moped. It can be driven by anyone holding a car driving licence without the need for a further test, or on a provisional licence. A more powerful model at 80cc is classed as a motor tricycle and requires an appropriate driving licence (or provisional licence in the short term). As a vehicle designed for road use, the S.V. NIPPI must, of course, be taxed, registered and insured. All models have an electric start and are fully automatic.

The 'on the road' price of the 50 cc model is £2,495.00 and the 80 cc model costs around £2,895.00.

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Can people with spina bifida have children?

by Dr Gillian Hunt, MA, MB, BChir, DCH, of Addenbrooke's Hospital and member of ASBAH's Medical Advisory Committee

A few days ago I met Sharon and Jack who were both in wheelchairs, with two year old Keith sitting astride his little trike. He had a cord round his waist the other end of which was held by Jack. Sharon has spina bifida and Jack is also disabled but he can walk and drive a car. Sharon looked tired and had lost weight; little Keith was full of life!

They live in a purpose-built bungalow beside a main road and Keith had learnt to climb out of the garden. Sharon said it had been quite easy when he was a small baby but now he was too heavy for her to lift and he knew just how to keep out of her reach. He would soon be going to play group but getting him there and back posed problems. Like other people with disabilities they were short of cash and could see that feeding and clothing Keith was already becoming more expensive. Faced with all the practical day-to-day difficulties of being a physically handicapped parent, Sharon was quite certain that she did not want any more children and had asked to be sterilised.

Girls with spina bifida may easily become pregnant so they will need to take precautions like anyone else. Unfortunately the pill is not always the most suitable method because of the added risk of blood clotting in legs which are paralysed. If she is also taking other medication, such as phenytoin, this may alter the efficacy of the pill.

However sexual intercourse may be quite difficult. A severe spinal curvature may cause a girl discomfort when lying on her back; her hips may be stiff so that her legs cannot be separated. Both these difficulties can generally be overcome by using different positions for intercourse.*



Illustration: Liz McQuiston in ASBAH's book "Sex for young people with spina bifida or cerebral palsy"

Sexual intercourse is much less likely to result in a baby if it's the man who has spina bifida. Even though many men get erections the coordinated movements and ejaculation of semen may not be possible in someone who is paralysed. Nevertheless some men with moderate degrees of paralysis do become fathers. But even if the act cannot be completed sex may still form a wonderful bond of love.

Whichever of the parents has spina bifida there is a risk that the baby might be so affected. The odds are about 1 in 20 but the risk is greater if there have been other members of either family with the condition. The best person to advise on this important matter is a doctor who is also a Genetic Counsellor (or Clinical Geneticist). He or she can be contacted through most big hospitals and may be associated with paediatric or obstetric departments.

Not only can you be told your chances of having a normal baby but you will be offered advice on how to prevent having an abnormal one. If the wife takes any medication this must be discussed because some drugs such as sodium valproate (epilepsy) may damage a developing baby if taken in early pregnancy. Advice may be offered about vitamin supplementation before the pregnancy is confirmed. Since the availability of antenatal screening for spina bifida varies between different areas you need to find out how to ensure that it is done, and done at the correct time during pregnancy so that an abortion can be considered if the baby is found to have spina bifida. Although such bad news is fairly un-

likely it has to be faced when planning a family; the good news is that a subsequent pregnancy will probably result in a normal healthy baby.

Before becoming pregnant a woman with spina bifida has to know whether her health will stand up to it. Pregnancy puts an added strain on the kidneys and pyelitis is quite common. The kidney function must be assessed particularly if the kidneys are known to have been damaged. Pregnancy may also make high blood pressure worse. Epileptic fits may become more frequent. As the baby gets bigger in the womb the back takes more strain and the woman gets less mobile. Most women with spina bifida are short and as pregnancy advances the womb presses up into her chest making her short of breath. Pressure on the bladder and bowel may produce problems of incontinence. Self-catheterisation may be more difficult and the catheter needs to be inserted further, but most women manage to catheterise successfully through pregnancy.

If the baby is small it may be born normally through the vagina. Epidural and spinal anaesthesia cannot generally be used for women with spina bifida because of abnormal structure of the back. But women with spina bifida often lack sensibility to pain at the outlet of the vagina so they may not feel a tear or its repair afterwards. If the pelvis is too small the baby is delivered by caesarian section. This may not be easy if there have been previous abdominal operations such as a urinary diversion, or an operation to enlarge the bladder with a patch of bowel, or even just the presence of a ventriculo-peritoneal

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Nicholas Scott talks to ASBAH. *Continued from p 5*

visit from a Fund Officer would be necessary. Mr Scott said he hoped applications would be dealt with quickly.

The new system of Family Credit, which replaces Family Income Supplement and which will benefit twice as many families, would be advertised widely, said the Minister.

He accepted that most concern was felt about Budgeting and Crisis Loans. "Of all the reforms this is the one where we feel we are in uncharted country". He said it was being monitored carefully and he hoped that organisations like ASBAH would let him know how it affected disabled people. The Minister suggested that it would be best if individual comments and views were channelled to him via ASBAH.

A questioner asked him whether charities would find a much greater burden of demand on them in view of the Government's stipulation that people should seek other help before going for a loan from the Government. "We are not sending people on a trawl around charities" he said. "There is absolutely no question of a regular referral to charitable bodies." Mr Scott said he felt that there would be some extra pressure on charities and he would be pleased to hear from them if this proved to be the case.

Another questioner suggested that £500 saving limit for those people applying for Emergency or Crisis loans was far too low. Mr Scott said he would look into the limit.

• Please get in touch with your Fieldworker or the Fieldwork office at National ASBAH if you have any queries or worries about the new arrangements.

Can people with spina bifida have children?



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shunt for hydrocephalus. So it is obviously very important to consult the obstetrician early since he may need advice from a urologist and a neurosurgeon. Recovery from a confinement may be slower than normal or incomplete. If the stretched muscles were already paralysed as a result of spina bifida they may be further damaged. Of particular importance are the pelvic muscles which support the bladder, womb and bowel and if these do not recover the unsupported organs may prolapse. Although a prolapse can be cured by operation in most women, those with spina bifida are sometimes more difficult to cure. Occasionally women with spina bifida who previously had control of their bladder lose this control following childbirth. This is a high price to pay for motherhood. **Childbearing is a big undertaking for a woman with spina bifida and it is an even bigger undertaking still to be in charge of an active child if you are confined to a wheelchair. The most severely handicapped spina bifida mother I know sadly decided to have her child adopted. He has brought great joy to a childless couple**

*A useful book *Sex for young people with spina bifida or cerebral palsy* can be obtained from ASBAH. price £1.75 to include *p and p.*, and further information and advice can be obtained from SPOD (*Sexual and Personal Relationships of the Disabled*) 286 Camden Road, London N7 0BJ.

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Round-up

Right: On terra firma waiting for the big moment.



The adventurous members of Sussex Association are aiming higher and higher....!

Reaching for the sky

by Margaret White, Sussex ASBAH Secretary

One morning last Spring we had a phone call from a pilot with British Caledonian who wanted to share his enormous enthusiasm for flying and take disabled children up in four seater planes from Goodwood.

Momentarily my mind reeled! was it possible?. We needed to find some members brave enough to have a go, and we would need to check out the insurance cover. But what else was stopping us?

Well, we did find later that the weather could stop us, and sometimes the planes weren't available, or our lovely pilot was in Hong Kong, but after some false starts, we got a group together on a blustery Sunday evening in August and assembled on the little airstrip at Goodwood.

The planes looked very tiny, sitting meekly on the grass. They looked even tinier when they were airborne and setting off into the sunset! But what a fantastic experience it was! looking down on Arundel Castle, the sea, Bognor Regis, Chichester Cathedral - everything laid out down be-



Left: Margaret White, Sussex ASBAH Secretary makes sure that everyone's on board

low so neat and tidy. We seemed to be suspended in the sky though we were apparently travelling at 160 mph. Each flight lasted about 30 minutes, ending with a zoom at high speed low over the airfield. Then back to the clubhouse for food and drink very generously provided by our pilot and his friends.

In November we went again, this time with some members of Sussex LIFT. Could we actually get everyone into the planes? It wasn't easy!

Some of the planes had access only over the wing, but these turned out to be the most accessible and with much pushing and pulling everyone got on board. It did seem as though one member at least would be permanently circling the clouds in her plane - so it was quite a relief to meet her back in the bar later, excited and stimulated by the challenge and eager to have another go. And we shall have another go, thanks to our friendly pilot and his friends.



Midland

Pamela Beckford of Perry Barr in Birmingham with her new budgie, 'Map' which she was able to buy with help from the Professor Zachary Fund. "It's a little boy budgie and I've called him 'Map' - spelt backwards for 'Pam' my name. He is quite chirpy and is green in colour" wrote Pam in a letter of thanks to the ASBAH fieldworker in the area.

Working towards a full Fieldwork Service

Continued from page 6

cover a patch that will go from Bedford down to Luton and across to Milton Keynes. Before we were able to make this appointment any calls to National Office for these areas were covered by the Fieldworker from another patch or by National Office Staff. We hope that this new service will benefit all concerned.

Training

A great deal of work is being done to train all the new Fieldworkers. Of course, training is of major importance both to new workers and to the well established ones in order to ensure that they are kept up to date with changes in the medical field, welfare rights etc. At present we are working hard to keep staff right up to date with changes in the Social Security system and, in fact, held a two-day very intensive training course in London last September in cooperation with Disability Alliance who made their two senior lecturers available.

Easing the workload

We are always aware of the tremendous work load with which Fieldworkers have to cope and we are actively seeking ways of assisting with this. In two instances Fieldworkers now have office accommodation within other voluntary organisations. One in Devon where we were offered an office within EXCI - Exeter Centre for Independent Living - and this is working very well. The other office offered to us was for the Greater Manchester worker and we have accommodation in a centre run by the Boys and Girls Welfare Society. We are very pleased to have these opportunities of working closely with colleagues in the Voluntary Sector. We hope that in time further such opportunities may be available to us.

Increasing support

Inevitably this is but a very brief idea of the Fieldwork service involvement around the country in the past year. I have not mentioned the complexity of the problems dealt with by the Fieldworkers, the numbers of families each is trying to support, the grants requested and made

by National Office, of the approaches made to statutory bodies with regard to the many matters of concern brought to our attention by the Fieldworkers. We must continue to seek ways of reducing the size of the areas we ask our Fieldworkers to cover. We must increase support made available to them both by specialist staff and in the administration aspects of the work. This latter becomes an increasing burden as the problems they are asked to solve become more complex and they are asked more and more often to approach relevant authorities on behalf of the families. We are fully aware that there are large areas of the country still without a Fieldwork service and we are considering ways of filling these gaps as soon as possible.

LIFT Conference

Unfortunately the LIFT Conference has had to be postponed from March 1988

As yet there is no new date fixed but we will let you know as soon as possible.

A walk on the wild side

International Wildlife Week

June 15-23, 1988. Five Oaks.

**by Paul Cooper,
Development Officer at
Five Oaks**

ASBAH's centre, Five Oaks, is situated in beautiful Yorkshire countryside. We are on the edge of Illkley Moor, of "Ilka Moor Bah Tat" fame. On this International Week we will observe moorland wildlife, i.e. pheasant, foxes and possibly badgers. We will also wander further afield in search of other species and other activities. We will carry out our activities in a cross section of landscapes from the Lake District in the West to the Yorkshire Moors in the East.

Here is a list of ideas and activities from which the programme will be drawn:

***Welcome! Slide show and talk on the work done by wardens, and the problems they face such as erosion, litter dogs etc.**

***Ilkley Moor patrol: a) plants
b) wildlife**

***Visit to Martin Mere Wildfowl Trust**

***Visit to Fairburn Ings Bird Sanctuary**

***River Life and Pond Dipping (taking part in National amphibian survey)**

***Badger Watch, Bat Watch, Owl Watch: These three are subject to interest and local conditions**

***Visit to Yorkshire Dales Farm - deer and trout**

***Possible Visit to Five Oaks by a Falconer**

***Visits to English Lake District, Yorkshire Moors and Yorkshire Coast.**

***Talk on taking wildlife photographs by a wildlife expert**

***Visit to English Dark Wood land**

***Cross country Land Rover ride**

***Small mammal studies**

There will also be a variety of social activities for all the participants, so everybody will have a "wild time".

The cost for the eight days is £175. (I am hoping that grant money will be available to subsidise the cost).

More details from Paul Cooper at Five Oaks, Ben Rhydding Drive, Ben Rhydding, Ilkley, West Yorks. LS29 8BD. Tel: 0943 603013



A LINK SPECIAL
ON HOUSING

THE

1987

HOUSING

BILL

by Carolyn Smith,
Accommodation Officer, ASBAH



A new Housing Bill is currently on its way through Parliament as a result of the Government White Paper on Housing issued in September 1987. Despite comments and suggestions from all areas of the housing world, the Housing Bill shows little change from the White Paper and is likely to be adopted unamended.

The Housing Bill is hailed by ministers as the key to bringing 500,000 empty homes into the private rented market by deregulating private rents, allowing council tenants to opt out of council control, extending the role of housing associations and redefining tenancy protection.

Should the Housing Bill succeed in creating a growth of property available for rent in the private sector it will not mark any major increase in housing options of disabled people, as the majority of existing private rented housing stock is physically inaccessible to people with disabilities.

PRIVATE RENTS

The Housing Bill intends to abolish rent controls on all tenancies in the hope of attracting more private landlords and private finance into rented housing. This will inevitably lead to higher rents as landlords will be able to charge "market rents" at a level to be agreed by the landlord and tenant. It will no longer be possible for a tenant to have a "fair rent" fixed, although tenants of a "shorthold" agreement will have the right to apply to a Rent Assessment Committee to fix a market rent. The general increase in private rent levels will have a particular impact upon disabled people as most housing features that are essential to a disabled person are desirable to the population as a whole, i.e. spacious rooms, wide corridors, location of community facilities. Therefore, the market rent of such a limited number of properties will be particularly high.

SHORTHOLD AND ASSURED
TENANCY

The Bill dispenses with other controls and regulations, such as unlimited security of tenure and distinction between furnished and unfurnished tenancies. Instead new private sector tenancies will take one of two forms.

The first is an extension of the "shorthold tenancy" introduced in the 1980 Housing Act. Shorthold tenancies will be available for fixed terms agreed between tenant and landlord, usually for a minimum of six months. Tenants will retain the right to have a maximum rent registered, based on a rate of return to the landlord set by the Environment Secretary. Shorthold tenants will have full security of tenure for the period of agreement, though the landlord is guaranteed possession at the end of that time, if required.

The second type of letting, "Assured" tenancy is also a variation on a tenancy first contained in the 1980 Housing Act. Any landlord will be free to negotiate with a tenant

continued on next page



Housing Bill continued

to fix an agreed rent, period of letting and other conditions. The tenant will have a statutory right to a new tenancy when the agreed period has ended and there will be provision for arbitration of the new rent level.

Under the new tenancies, partners of the tenant will no longer have rights of succession, nor will sons or daughters. However, joint tenancies may still be awarded.

HARASSMENT

The Bill extends the definition of harassment by a landlord and provides a means for tenants unlawfully harassed out of their tenancy to claim damages. Landlords will be guilty of harassment if they "persistently withdraw or withhold services reasonably required".

CHANGE OF TENURE

Although existing tenants will retain their present tenure, there are many instances in which disabled people may have no choice but to seek a transfer to more suitable accommodation, for example, when adaptations are impracticable or when a property is no longer of adequate size. Those disabled people having to seek a transfer into privately rented or housing association property will now lose the security of tenure provided by the local authority.

OPTING OUT OF COUNCIL CONTROL

The Bill introduces the "pick a landlord" scheme, whereby council tenants will be able to transfer to private landlord or housing association approved by the Housing Corporation and agreed by the Secretary of State. Some council tenants will not have a choice, but will have their homes managed by the Housing Action Trust (H.A.T.) which will be run by the Government.

An approved landlord will pick an estate or area of public housing and apply to acquire it. The applicant landlord must then consult the tenants on the proposals, including terms of tenancy, rent and any repair or improvement required. Unless a majority of the tenants in the block or building vote against the proposed transfer, the application will proceed. A tenant who voted against the transfer may choose to remain with the council, which will retain the lease on the property, until the expiry of that tenancy.

Where a transfer to a private landlord proceeds, tenants will be awarded Assured Tenancies and a new market rent will be set.

HOUSING TRANSFERS WITHIN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

The local authority has played a major role in providing housing for disabled people in a number of ways - purpose built homes, adapting existing stock, nomination

rights to housing associations, financing improvement grants and transferring tenants to more suitable housing. It is doubtful that the Government's proposals will advance local authorities' ability to ensure adequate housing for those disadvantaged groups traditionally provided for by the public sector.

A considerable proportion of council housing stock is no longer in the public sector, having been bought by tenants or sold in other ways. If a substantial proportion of the present local authority stock is transferred to other landlords, then transfers within the local authority housing will almost cease to exist. Local authorities will also be left with the least desirable parts of the housing stock.

THE GROWTH OF HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS

The Housing Bill proposes to extend the role of Housing Associations by introducing private finance to fund schemes. The Housing Corporation will be the sole funder apart from private finance and loans from local authorities will no longer be allowed.

Housing Associations will be considered part of the private rented sector, letting properties on Assured or shorthold tenancies and charging "appropriate" rents below free market level.

Housing Associations have largely complemented public sector housing by providing housing for disadvantaged and low income groups. The introduction of private finance threatens the traditionally social role that Housing Associations have played as tenants will lose the security of tenure previously offered and rents are likely to rise to market level. There is also the inevitable danger that the rapid growth of some Housing Associations will lead to more bureaucratic practices and that innovative housing projects for people with disabilities will no longer be viable, if dependent upon private finance.

The Government Housing Bill, whilst attempting to increase the number of homes available for rent in Great Britain, does not acknowledge the needs of those who require rented accommodation, i.e. disadvantaged groups. Although there is an obvious and overwhelming demand for rented housing amongst disabled people, any increase in the private rented housing sector will only be of marginal help in meeting the demand, due to the physical nature of this housing stock.

If you feel concerned about the implications of the Housing Bill upon your present or future tenancy rights within Council, private rented or housing association accommodation, then contact me (Carolyn Smith) at National ASBAH for further information and advice.



The development of ASBAH's housing services

Since the appointment of an Accommodation Officer in 1983, ASBAH has developed its housing service for people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus in a number of ways:-

HOUSING ADVICE

ASBAH gives help and advice about housing issues to any person with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus and their family. The majority of housing enquiries received by National ASBAH are concerned with -

- i. Home Improvement grants and adaptation work.
- ii. Sources of housing available to the younger disabled.
- iii. Residential placements and funding.
- iv. Housing benefit and other living costs.

National ASBAH receive a steady flow of housing enquiries, mainly from young people themselves. However, this flow of enquiries is expected to increase from April 1988 when the new Social Security Act will be implemented.

POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

ASBAH responds to and comments upon legislative proposals concerned with housing and Community Care. More recently ASBAH has responded to the following reports and committees:

- Review of Residential Care - Working Party chaired by Lady Wagner
- "Public Support for Residential Care" - Joint Central and Local Government Working Party
- "Guide to Fire Precautions in Existing Places of Entertainment"
- "Schedule 2 of the 1985 Building Regulations"

HOUSING MANAGEMENT

ASBAH actively participates in the development of housing for disabled people by working in partnership with Housing Associations to provide a variety of housing options for its members.

National ASBAH has 'management agreements' with 3 major housing associations and supports the work of local associations in similar housing ventures:

The housing associations concerned have obtained funding from the Housing Corporation to build these

special projects whilst ASBAH has provided a range of management duties to the tenants of each project. These include:

- *Advising the housing association on design, aids and equipment.*
- *Financing void periods (when a property is vacant).*
- *Forming a joint committee with representatives of the housing association in order to review management agreement and select tenants.*
- *To notify the housing association of maintenance or repairs to be carried out and any tenants change of circumstances.*
- *To provide or arrange for social, medical and domestic support for tenants.*
- *To provide help and advice to tenants about benefits, budgeting, cooking, rent payments, tenancy rights etc.*

HOUSING PROJECTS

1 The Independence Training Flat

In May 1985, ASBAH opened its independence training flat in Cwmbran, South Wales. The flat is within a development of 52 single persons flats built by the United Kingdom Housing Trust. ASBAH is the official tenant of the two bedroomed flat and sub-lets to any person with a disability who wishes to 'try out' living independently for a temporary period - no more than 8 weeks.

The occupant of the flat is responsible for rent payments and other household bills such as telephone, water rates and electricity. The flat enables young disabled people to find out through experience what is involved in living independently, i.e. living costs, community support and statutory help. However, the ASBAH fieldworker is always available to give any advice and help required by the occupant.

The flat has been running successfully for over two years and has given many young disabled the chance to discover their ability to live independently within the community.

The majority of occupants have been known to National ASBAH, although other voluntary organisations have

continued on next page



continued

utilised this resource for its membership which has enabled ASBAH to develop good working relationships with organisations such as, the Spastics Society, Torfean Community Enterprises and Social Services departments.

2. Self-Contained Flats

The success of the independence training flat in Cwmbran demonstrated the need of ASBAH's members for permanent self-contained accommodation, particularly in the South Wales area. In January 1986 the Family Care Housing Association completed a development of 8 self-contained flats in Newport to be managed by ASBAH.

The development consists of four groundfloor wheelchair flats and four first floor flats for those able to walk. The age range of the tenants in this development is between 21 and 30 years and almost all the tenants have spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus.

The Gwent fieldworker is on hand to provide help and support although the tenants have proved to be quite self-sufficient and able to direct their own services.

Tenants pay rent directly to Family Care Housing Association and are responsible for the payment of other household bills to the relevant authorities.

The Newport flats have become "known" to many young disabled people, parents and professionals, in and around Newport, consequently an informal waiting list for accommodation within the scheme has now developed.

3. Bedsits and Shared Flats

ASBAH is currently working with Sanctuary Housing Association to develop accommodation for young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus within the grounds of Five Oaks residential centre in West Yorkshire.

The scheme will consist of four bedsitting rooms and four 2-3 person shared flats. It is due to be completed by November/December 1988, and occupied by January 1989.

The bedsits will provide self-contained accommodation for single people with disabilities for a maximum period of six months. The aim is to give training and support to young people living independently for the first time. The independence training within the bedsits will be carried out by Five Oaks staff who will provide 24 hour emergency cover to all residents. It is hoped that after the six month period of independence training the young people will have the necessary skills and confidence to move onto more independent accommodation.

The shared flats will be for 2-3 people to share, each having their own bedroom and sharing kitchen, bathroom and lounge facilities. These flats are aimed at young people with disabilities who require more time in a supportive environment before moving onto self-contained accommodation of their own.

Regular medical, social and domestic support will be provided by the statutory services and tenants will be responsible for the payment of rent and other household expenses.

Both the shared flats and bedsits will be built to accommodate wheelchair users and height adjustable units in the kitchens and bathrooms will be installed. Furnishings in all the accommodation will be provided by ASBAH and Sanctuary Housing Association.

Although this scheme is not yet completed National ASBAH has already received several enquiries from parents and young people.

NATIONAL AND LOCAL ASBAH PROJECTS

1. Leeds and Bradford

National ASBAH has worked alongside the Leeds and Bradford Association to develop a three person shared bungalow in the Roundhay, Leeds. The bungalow is one unit within an integrated housing scheme being built by Habinteg Housing Association and due to be completed by May 1989.

It is hoped that the bungalow will provide young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus with the opportunity to experience sharing accommodation as a 'first stage' to independent living.

It is envisaged that residents will occupy the bungalow for 2-3 years before moving onto more independent housing.

2. Trafford and Salford

National ASBAH has given advice and support to the Trafford and Salford Local Association during the development of its housing scheme with the Manchester Methodist Housing Association.

The scheme, which is available for occupation in January 1988, is situated in Stretford, Manchester, and consists of twelve self-contained flats four of which are managed by the local association.

The flats are for young single people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus who require a supported housing environment. The local association has an office within the housing scheme and are able to provide daytime help and advice to residents.

3. Midland

The Midland Local Association is in the very early stages of a housing project with Copec Housing Trust. With help and advice from National ASBAH the Midland Association has recently undertaken a short survey of the housing needs of its members in order to determine the

Continued on next page



continued

type and quantity of housing required by young disabled people in the Birmingham area.

It is certain that within 3-4 years Midland ASBAH will be managing a mixed housing and care development.

4. North West London

National ASBAH initiated discussions between the North West London Local Association and the Ealing Family Housing Association earlier in 1987.

Although this project is still in the very early stages, Ealing Family Housing Association has identified a five bedroomed property in Acton which may be rehabilitated to accommodate four young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus.

The shared house will be managed by the North West London ASBAH and the possibility of employing a support worker for the house is being discussed.

Planning permission is being sought at present and it is hoped that completion will be within 2-3 years.

FURTHER HOUSING INVOLVEMENT

1. Farnborough - Hants

National ASBAH has played a major role in this shared housing scheme since its inception in 1985. The 3 person shared house is a local authority property belonging to the Borough of Rushmoor. The house is fully wheelchair accessible with a vertical lift.

Although ASBAH hold no formal management agree-

ment with Rushmoor Borough Council, ASBAH provided tenants with welfare grants in order to furnish the property and continues to provide fieldwork support to those tenants with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus.

This is one of the many projects in which ASBAH is recognised as a referral agency.

2. Bethnal Green, London

National ASBAH has given advice and support to Look Ahead (Beacon Hostels) Housing Association in the development of this project for single people. The development, which opened in September 1987, consists of 45 shared flats for young single people. Six of the 2 person shared flats are adapted for wheelchair users with height-adjustable kitchen units. To date, ASBAH has successfully referred one person with spina bifida and hydrocephalus to the scheme at Bethnal Green and has placed several young people in other Beacon Hostels projects throughout London.

3. Keighley, West Yorkshire

The development of this independent living scheme by Dr Barnardo's, Bradford Metropolitan Council and the North British Housing Association has received support from ASBAH staff at Five Oaks Residential Centre.

The aim of the scheme is to provide accommodation for three disabled people and three Community Service Volunteers within an adapted shared house.

Completion was due in February 1988 and tenants have been shortlisted for assessment at Five Oaks. Those shortlisted have a variety of physical disability including spina bifida and hydrocephalus.

THE FUTURE

Many more local associations are expressing concern about the housing options of their members and looking to National ASBAH for guidance. In response to this growing concern ASBAH will continue -

- to provide experienced and expert advice to local associations wishing to be actively involved in housing projects.; initiating discussions with the relevant housing and planning authorities when required.

- to maintain and develop the housing advisory service to young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus, their families and professionals, with regard to changing housing and welfare benefit legislation.

- to maintain its own housing projects and consider the development of further partnerships with housing bodies where demand is not being met by the statutory authorities.

- to extend working relationships with housing providers in the public and private sector, social services departments and voluntary organisations to ensure the growth of housing options for people with spina bifida and or hydrocephalus.



HOUSING

Housing Benefit

CHANGES FROM APRIL 1988

<u>Existing Scheme</u>	<u>After April 1988</u>
Benefit assessed on gross income	Benefit assessed on net income
No capital cut-off	£6,000 capital cut-off
Different rules for those on Supplementary Benefit to those in work	Same rules will apply
Benefit on rates 100% if on Supplementary Benefit	80% if on Income Support
Withdrawal rate on rent 35%	Withdrawal rate on rent up to 65%
Extra benefit for some pensions	No extra benefit
Help with high, fixed fuel charges	No help available
Housing Benefit Supplement (HBS)	No HBS because no need
Power to withhold benefit on high rents	Tougher powers
Local schemes to increase benefit for all claimants	Local schemes only for war pensioners
Extra benefit for single parents	No extra benefit
Discretion to give extra benefit in special circumstances	Discretion extended

The 1988 Social Security Act will introduce a unified system of Housing Benefit, which will end discrimination between claimants of Supplementary Benefit (to become Income Support) and people in work. The new system is also said to be less complex. But this welcome step forward is undermined by a crude cost-cutting approach, which will negate many of its potential benefits. A minimum of £450 million (about a tenth of Housing Benefit spending) will be cut from the scheme and over two thirds of the 7 million recipients will lose some benefit. About 1 million will cease to qualify for any Housing Benefit.

continued on next page



HOUSING

continued

THE MAJOR CHANGES

Under the present rules Housing Benefit claimants can have a fairly high level of capital and still be eligible, but from April any capital will be counted and anyone whose capital amounts to more than £6,000 will be barred from Housing Benefit.

The value of the claimants home and personal possessions will not be added into the calculation of capital holding, money paid in a discretionary trust, or a trust set up with money that has come from payment for personal injury will also be disregarded when assessing capital. National Savings Certificates and Premium Bonds will be counted as capital.

If the total amounts to between £3,000 and £6,000 the claimant will be deemed as receiving £1 per week in income for every £250 in capital possessed above £3,000 - thus Housing Benefit will be reduced.

If the claimant is working, Housing Benefit will be assessed on net weekly earnings rather than on gross income as in the present system. Income Tax, National Insurance Contributions and half of any Superannuation Contributions, will be deducted to give a net earnings figure, from which 'earnings disregard' (the amount which a claimant may earn before it affects entitlement to benefit) will be deducted.

On present information the disregards will be:

Single Person.....	£ 5 per week
Couple.....	£10 per week
Disabled person, lone parent and person unemployed for at least one year.....	£15 per week

Attendance Allowance and Mobility Allowance will continue to be disregarded as income, for the purpose of Housing Benefit.

Under the present system a claimant's entitlement to Housing Benefit is assessed by comparing his/her income to a set 'needs allowance'. Each claimant will be set an 'applicable amount', which will vary including to age, marital status or special circumstances. Detailed information is not yet available on what the 'applicable amounts' will be.

Those claimants with incomes higher than the 'applicable amount' will now have to pay 65p from every £1 they earn in excess of the 'applicable amount' (Rent Taper). Entitlement to Housing Benefit, in respect of rent, would be reduced by this excess amount.

The new system will not only increase the Rent Taper to 65%, but introduces a Rate Taper of 20%. This is in line with the Government's contention that all rate payers should pay at least 20% of their rates.

Some compensation for this will be built into the total weekly benefit of those on Income Support (Supplementary Benefit) in the form of allowances - £1.30 for couples and £1 for singles per week - but these will not begin to cover the 20% rate contribution in many areas such as London and the South East.

Water rates will not be covered at all.

Local Authorities will still be able to pay extra benefit to individuals in special circumstances and have Rate Act powers to reduce rate bills in cases of hardship.

Other changes include the ending of assistance with fuel charges, and the introduction of tougher powers to withhold benefit on rent increases and high rents. Local authorities will face financial penalties if they pay benefit on rents above the level set by the DHSS.

The future for the poorest and most vulnerable people in society looks bleak particularly in the light of the Government's Housing Bill to deregulate private rents and the wider introduction of Shorthold and Assured tenancies.

The most useful measure that can be taken to soften the impact of the Social Security Act is to ensure that you are receiving your full Housing and Supplementary Benefit entitlements.

If you would like further advice about either of these benefits contact Carolyn Smith at National Office.

ENDS LINK HOUSING SPECIAL



"Whilst the actual medical care in hospital was efficient (how many times did they change the sheet during delivery?), our emotional needs were not even thought of" from a letter to SATFA

Vital need for a support group

On January 19, two separate organisations came together in Central Hall, Westminster and afterwards at the House of Parliament for their official launch: SATFA - Support After Termination for Abnormality, and CARE the Scottish equivalent.

This was a joint launch because both organisations have similar aims and because of the need to show their joint and total opposition to David Alton's proposed amendments to the Abortion Act.

Sara Kenyon, Sister at the Midwifery Ultrasound Unit at King's College, and who has worked so hard to get SATFA established said there was a vital need for a support group. "the choice for termination is made out of love and caring."

Helen Statham who had had a termination a year previously and was again pregnant said "Abortion is distressing. What is needed is support, before during and after - not illegality".

SATFA, the start of which was supervised by ASBAH now has its own office: 29/30 Soho Square, London W1V 6JB. Tel: 01 439 6124



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• **BANSTEAD PLACE MOBILITY CENTRE** celebrates its 6th birthday on May 1. During this time, well over 2,000 people have been assessed for driving a modified car or a 4 mph pavement vehicle.

Support from the Ford Motor Company has enabled staff to man a mobile unit which has visited all parts of the country assessing and advising people on how their car should be modified to enable them to drive. In addition, also with the help of Ford, the Centre is able to offer a free follow-up check to clients enabling them to return to their car to see the driving instructor and therapist. The information service handles about 80 enquiries each week. The Centre enjoys very good co-operation from motor manufacturers, and disabled people are able to have driving lessons on various adapted cars which are held on loan.

The Centre also organises various courses, seminars and workshops for driving instructors and therapists

A research programme is underway at present to evaluate the long term effect of assessment and increased mobility.

For further information contact Mrs Morigue Cornwell, MCSP, Mobility Officer, Banstead Mobility Centre, Park Road, Banstead, Surrey, SM7 3EE. Tel: 07373 51674.

The Banstead Mobility Centre's unit hopes to visit the following venues during 1988:

- March.....Newcastle Gen Hospital.
- May..... Birmingham (NAIDEX)
- July.....Norwich
- Sept.lckley
- Oct.....Exeter

Newslines NEWSLINES Newslines



The specially equipped Ford Cargo mobile assessment unit run by Banstead Place which will be touring the country again this Summer. It will be accompanied by an Escort car fitted with power steering and automatic transmission which will allow road tests to be given to those people who already have some driving experience. See article left for more about the mobile unit and for dates and venues for this year.



The assessment unit is based on a Ford Escort dashboard. A wrap-around road scene simulates common hazards and the results of the tests are provided immediately.

Photos: Ford Motor Co

• Over 50 employers and unions came together with about 40 disabled people at a conference in London in November on the subject 'Making Employment Policies for Disabled People Work in Practice'. It was organised by Lambeth ACCORD. "This conference was different to many others. It was not about

generalising, not about the quota system and especially not for professionals to talk 'about' disabled job seekers. This time disabled people were sharing their knowledge with employers who had already decided they wanted to hear. ...Lambeth ACCORD in organising this day asked delegates to consider 'Why

disabled people don't apply' and 'What happens to those who do apply'. For too long disabled people have not been viewed as an active workforce. This conference emphasised the more novel maxim that good practices for disabled employees amount to good practices for all" said the organisers.

• The SNAP Project was launched in January to help parents of handicapped children negotiate the minefield of bureaucracy created by the 1981 Education Act. SNAP (Special Needs Advisory Project) was launched by Dafydd Wigley, MP for Caernarfon, and in its pilot year will operate in Gwent, Mid Glamorgan and West Glamorgan. It will provide a neutral and independent source of help to parents. "SNAP volunteers will give parents the confidence to ask questions and discuss on an equal level decisions which will affect their child" said Jean Price, Education Adviser with MENCAP in Wales. The Project has received funding from Opportunities for Volunteering and is jointly coordinated by MENCAP the Spastics Society and the Wales Council for the Disabled.

For more details contact SNAP, 169 City Road, Cardiff. Tel: 0222 494933

• A new guide aimed at encouraging disabled people to explore and discover the wealth of creative opportunities offered at many arts centres in the UK has been published by RADAR: Arts Centres & Creative Opportunities for Disabled People. Over 400 projects and centres are listed.

Price: £3 (incl. p & p) available from RADAR, 25 Mortimer St. London WIN 8AB.

Tom Dowling, who writes his own column in the Liverpool Echo for disabled readers, and is himself in a wheelchair, looks at an exciting holiday complex which caters for able-bodied and disabled people at Los Cristianos on Tenerife:

The stuff of which dreams are made



Tom Dowling viewing the building operations at Mar y Sol

It was only a day in mid-December, but for me Christmas had arrived early.

That morning I sat in my wheelchair on the sundrenched sands of Los Cristianos and watched the beach vendors doing a roaring trade in inflatable plastic Santas at 500 pesetas a throw. Came the afternoon Lying face-down in a stylish apartment I was relaxing with a massage - purely therapeutic, you understand, from a beautiful Scandinavian girl.

It was the first massage I had received since being confined to a chair 13 years ago and I was enjoying it during physiotherapy time at a unique new holiday centre in Southern Tenerife. It was the stuff of which dreams are made. And I was soon to find out that a lot of dreams are well on the way to coming true at Mar y Sol, a development that could open up new holiday horizons for the handicapped people.

It is not only the disabled who are catered for either. Whether you rely on a wheelchair or not you will be made welcome at this remarkable health centre, which is well on the way to completion.

For ten years Hans-Joachim Fischer, now 47, and Katharina Gronberg, who is 40, nursed a burning ambition to build a holiday centre designed to meet the needs of people with mobility problems...a centre that would offer health and fitness facilities in apartments that could be either rented, bought outright or purchased on a co-ownership basis.

Beyond the business interest lies a very personal reason why they have invested their money, time and energy. Herr Fischer's wife, Elsa, is severely handicapped with multiple sclerosis and is confined to a wheelchair. Katharina's eight-year-old daughter Angelica is mentally disabled. And four of the remaining five shareholders in the company have direct involvement with disability in their families.

Katharina points out that the complex won't be run like a hospital or institution for the handicapped. "We want PEOPLE to come here - and if they have special needs then we will be able to help them"

Katharina arrived in Los Cristianos to work in a travel agency in 1972



Mar y Sol (in English: sea and sun)

after studying politics and business and making a tour of Europe. Two years later she married a Spanish teacher and started her job. "Frequently people in wheelchairs would tell me of the problems they had met in hotels and asked to stay at the centre. All the time I had to refuse."

It was on one such occasion that Herr Fischer - now president of Germany's physically handicapped organisation - and his wife Elsa called.

Elsa, then 30, had been struck with a severe form of multiple sclerosis. The Fischers had been advised by doctors to holiday in Los Cristianos because it enjoyed a healing climate particularly beneficial to people with MS and arthritis. On each visit the Fischers noticed an improvement in Elsa's health, but finding suitable accommodation was becoming another major problem.

The day they visited Vintersol and spoke to Katharina the idea of Mar y Sol was born...finally almost three years ago the foundations were laid - on a site 300 metres from the bay, with a gentle slope leading down to the waterfront.

On the way back that slope can become quite a hill for anyone who is in a wheelchair or weak on their legs, but it's a problem the company are confident will be solved once the wheelchair service centre comes into operation. Plans include electric wheelchairs for hire, an adapted mini-bus and plenty of willing hands.

The need for such a centre had long been felt. But developers have traditionally shied away from building for the handicapped - the view is that

continued on next page

holidays

Mar y Sol - continued from page 22

such projects require too much time for too little gain. It needed someone with a personal stake in such a project. There are six such people at Mar y Sol, and another who is actually building the centre and whose heart is very much in the right place.

And when Mar y Sol is completed next winter what will Herr Fischer do then? "Then I will bring Elsa out here to live. It has been our project for these past ten years. However it turns out we shall have to live with it."

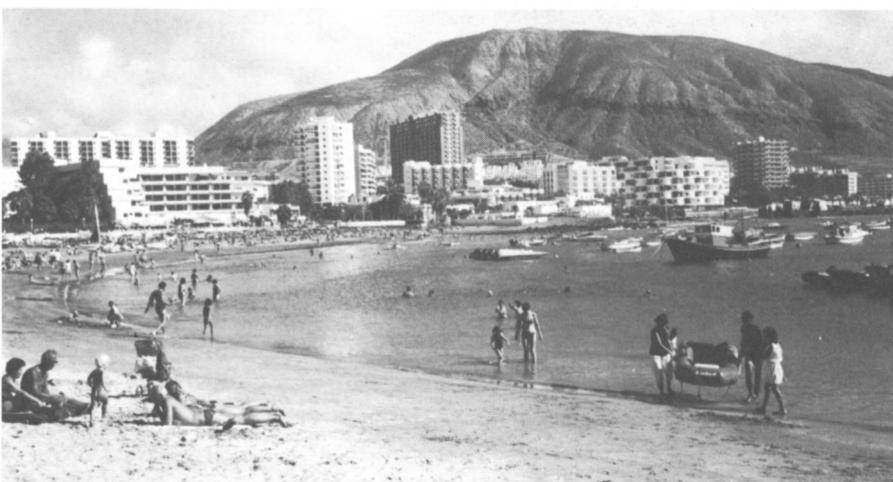
For more details contact: Katherina Gronberg, Mar y Sol SA, Casa Angelica, Traseria Vintersol, Los Cristianos, Tenerife. Tel: 010 34 (9) 22791377

SHINING EXAMPLE

Mar y Sol is a purpose-built health and fitness resort that welcomes EVERYONE - including those of us in wheelchairs - and it could well turn out to be a shining example to the rest of the world.

But it is not a typical health centre. There are no tennis courts or squash courts. But there are therapy rooms, a gymnasium with specialised equipment and there will soon be saunas, mud-baths, three swimming pools with (cold and heated) sea water that is drawn up through a well inside the complex. There will also be a water massage section.

The water level in the pools will be flush with the bath side, making getting in and out easier - and there will be hoists for those who have extra difficulties. There will also be a 'service centre' from which people can hire



The resort of Los Cristianos

electric wheelchairs and other equipment to make a disabled person's stay more comfortable. Staff will also be able to help if people have difficulty negotiating the short hill that leads up to the complex from the beach. In addition the complex will offer medical, psychological and rehabilitation treatment, plus 24 hour nursing staff. And there will be a shopping centre, hairdressing salon and a restaurant which will cater for those requiring special diets. A specially adapted mini-bus with lifts for taking on board wheelchairs will be available for excursions - and there will also be a car fitted with hand controls for hire.

The centre comprises 227 units, ranging from studios to two-bedroom apartments, all built with the wheelchair user in mind. There are no steps; the kitchens allow easy access; electric fittings are at wheelchair height, and the bathrooms have been carefully designed with sufficient space for wheelchairs to be positioned next to toilets. There are wheel-in shower units and in some of the units grab rails are being fitted.

There are also alarm systems linking each unit to the reception area.

Holiday arrangements and prices have still to be finalised. But for anyone - or organisation - wanting to buy their own place in the sun, a bedsit-type studio will cost you in the region of £33,000; a one-bedroom apartment £55,000; and the two bedroom suite £84,000.

There is also a co-ownership scheme for those wanting to buy a minimum of one month every year: Prices £2,800 - £4,000 (studio) and £4,500 - £10,000 (one-bedroom apartment) per month. With co-ownership - unlike timeshare deals - the buyer will receive the legal deeds representing the month(s) he or she owns.

It is difficult to compare prices, but Herr Fischer says that the cost of the units is no more than ten per cent higher than similar properties in the area. "But unlike other complexes people can be assured that these units will still be standing for many years to come - and of course there are all these extra facilities."

● The Lord Nelson

You are invited to 'sign on' as voyage crew aboard this mighty square rigger, run by the Jubilee Sailing Trust. The Lord Nelson makes a number of short voyages of a few days duration, often calling in at foreign ports. The crew consists of able-bodied and disabled people aged 16-70 and you don't need to have had sailing experience. The ship has specially designed facilities so that the disabled - even those in wheelchairs - can participate fully in

ALL duties, including going up the mast for a seagull's eye-view of everything, if you've a mind to.

Full details from the Jubilee Sailing Trust, Test Road, Eastern Docks, Southampton SO9 1GG. Tel: 0703 631395.

● Belgian Holidays

Two Belgian holiday centres which may be particularly suitable for disabled people have begun to sell packages to the UK market. The centres -

De Ceder, close to Ghent in Flanders and Les Riezes et Les Sarts in the Ardennes - offer easily accessible accommodation and a number of rooms have been specially adapted for disabled guests.

Prices start from £69 for a two night break and include full board and ferry crossing with Sally Line (Ramsgate to Dunkirk).

Full details from Distant Link Ltd., London House, 266 Fulham Road, London SW10 9EL. Tel: 01 351 7292.

holidays

● The Calvert Trust Adventure Centre

The centre, set in a beautiful position in Keswick, offers activity holidays for groups of disabled people - usually 6 nights, 4 nights, or 2 nights. Arrangements can be made for individuals to attend with a compatible group. Programmes can be tailor-made. The centre is open from mid-January to mid-November for archery, angling, bird watching, riding (indoor school), hillwalking and nature trails. Between April and September, sailing and canoeing are added to the programme. The centre also has an indoor heated swimming pool. Prices range from £150 for a standard course to £104 for a mid week course and £53 for a weekend. This includes full board, use of all equipments, transport, instructions etc.

Details from the Calvert Trust Adventure Centre, Little Crowthwaite, Underskiddaw, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 4QD. Tel: 07687 72254

● Chalfont Line

Described as promoting "worldwide holidays for people with mobility problems and their friends" Chalfont Lines offers a good choice of short breaks and longer holidays - from a 'liberation special' (two weeks winter break in Torremolinos) to a three week trip to New Zealand by way of Los Angeles and Honolulu. There are Christmas and New Year breaks in Cliftonville; mini cruises to Germany, and Sweden; coach tours to Switzerland, Lourdes or the Dutch bulbfields; weekends in London and Paris and weeks at Somerwest at Minehead, or a hotel at Ilfracombe. There's also a fortnight's holiday to Florida (Orlando).

Coach transport and hotels are accessible. Chalfont has been operating specialised transport for over 15 years and providing holidays for eight years. They will, if necessary, help you find a companion helper (you pay their holiday cost).

For more details and a copy of the brochure contact The Chalfont Line, 4 Medway Parade, Perivale, Middx. UB6 8HA. Tel: 01 997 3799.

● Chalet in Orkney

A self-catering chalet owned and run by Orkney Round Table is offered to disabled people, families and friends in Orkney. All accommodation is on the ground floor. The ramped entrance is 34" wide, and minimum door widths are the same. There is an open plan living/dining room and kitchen, bathroom and bedroom. There is turning space and room for lateral transfer in the bathroom. The chalet is fully insulated and has electric heating throughout. There is a portable colour TV, and a telephone. All cooking utensils, crockery, blankets and pillows are provided, but guests should bring own sheets and pillowcases.

There is no charge for use of the chalet by disabled people, their families and friends.

Details: Thord, Burnside, Burray, Orkney. Tel: 0856 73 285

● Group stays in Paris

As reasonably priced accommodation for groups in Paris is not that simple to find, it is welcome news that the Institut National de Readaptation is opening up some of its rooms to visitors to the French capital.

The Institut is part of the Hopital National de Saint-Maurice, situated close to the Bois de Vincennes on the outskirts of Paris. The accommodation is offered to groups of between 20 and 30 people who must be under 20 years old. It will be available during July and August and at Christmas and Easter vacations. Accommodation is fully accesible and services and activities (including full language tuition if required) are provided on an 'a la carte' basis. Care can also be provided. Prices are based on a daily per person rate from 200 francs.

More details from Hopital National de Saint-Maurice, Institut de Readaptation, 14 Rue du Val d'Osne, 94410 Saint-Maurice. Tel. 1 43 75 92 22.

● Portugese holidays

Winterlagos and Winterluz are two small holiday schemes in Portugal aiming to cater for between four and five wheelchair users at a time together with their companions.

Winterluz is based at studio-style cottages in the fishing village of Praia

da Luz on the Algarve. Winterlagos uses suitable hotel accommodation in Lagos town.

The holidays run until mid March and are based on a weekly rate of £289 per person half board inclusive of return flight from Gatwick to Faro.

Details from J & R Turnbull, 21b West Street, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 7AW. Tel: 0258 55082 or 01 337746.

● Tadworth Court Holiday Unit

Tadworth Court lies in acres of garden and woodland at Tadworth in Surrey. During the Summer months it operates a holiday scheme for mentally and physically handicapped children, aged 4-16 years. There is also a fortnight for over 16s towards the end of the Summer.

The programme of activities is very varied and there is a one to one ratio of staff to children so that everyone is able to share experiences and enjoy themselves to the full. Day and night trained nurse cover is available and also full medical cover.

There is a chargeable fee for the schemes and Tadworth Court advises all parents to contact their Social Service Departments in respect of this funding.

Further details from the Project Leader, Tadworth Court Trust, Tadworth Court, Tadworth, Surrey KT20 5RU. Tel: 0737 357171.

● The Scout Holiday Homes Trust

Whether or not you are a scouting family, you will be welcome to take any of the self-catering holidays offered by the Scout Holiday Homes Trust. It has a range of well kept caravan and chalets in various parts of the country mainly on holiday sites - in Somerset, Dorset, Devon, Wales, Suffolk, Cornwall, Scotland and Humberside.

The trust was formed in order to provide self-catering holiays at economic rates for families with a handicapped member of any age - not necessarily connected with a scout or girl guide movement.

Details from the Scout Holiday Homes Trust, Baden Powell House, Queen's Gate London SW7 5JS. Tel: 01 584 7030 ext 225

continued on next page

● **Winged Fellowship**

The Winged fellowship celebrates its 25th anniversary this year and once again is offering a range of holidays at its various centres in this country. It also has special interest fortnights on craft, fishing, music, drama, and photography. Out of season holidays are encouraged at reduced rates. (The total price for a disabled person and carer staying at one of the centres - Jubilee Lodge - for the week of March 26-April 2 would be £176).

For details contact Winged Fellowship, Angel House, Pentonville Road, London N1 9XD. Tel: 01 833 2594.

● **Threshold Travel**

This year's brochure features individual holidays to places ranging from the Channel Islands to Kenya, and group tours as far afield as Florida, Egypt and Kenya (a safari) as well as to Malta and Majorca. (The Florida holiday does provide a fully adapted coach, unlike the LINK readers' holiday, but it does not include the attraction of a few days in Clearwater and is appreciably more expensive). Threshold claim that all hotels and resorts are personally inspected by their staff and wheelchair advisers and they aim to provide a personalised service.

For a copy of the brochure contact Threshold Travel Ltd., PO Box 25, Wythenshaw, Manchester M23 9JB

● **'Tailor-made' holidays: courtesy of the Holiday Care Service**

An extremely useful service is provided by this organisation. It is a registered charity providing free information and advice on holidays for people with special needs - those who are elderly, disabled, one parent families or people with difficult circumstances which make it hard to have a suitable break. Enquiries from individual people with difficulties or their carers can be made either by telephone or letter. The service provides details of what seems most appropriate to the needs of each enquirer. It does not make reservations or bookings, but hopes to give as much information as possible from which to make a choice. The service has details of guest houses hotels etc. where a "friendly eye" would be kept on a visitor up to places which offer full nursing care. It has details of accommodation, transport, publications and guides, inclusive holidays in the UK and abroad and possible sources of financial help, and details of help with transport.

The address is Holiday Care Service, 2 Old Bank Chambers, Station Road, Horley, Surrey RH6 9HW. Tel: 0293 774535.

● **A warm welcome at Dobwalls Theme Park, Cornwall**

The theme park open all the year, is familiar to those staying at the nearby Spastic Society centre, Churchtown Farm, and extends a very warm welcome to families and to those with physical disabilities.

One of the Park's three main attractions - Mr Thorburn's Edwardian Countryside - a revolutionary audio-visual celebration of 200 paintings by world-renowned wildlife artist, Archibald Thorburn (1860-1935) has been specially designed to accommodate guests in wheelchairs. It was opened by Prince Charles three years ago. Instead of hanging on the walls as in a traditional gallery, Thorburn's paintings are seen as part of a recreation of the countryside which inspired them, with all its authentic sights, sounds and even smells!

There is an Edwardian gift shop and a tea room and specially constructed ramps give access to another of the main attractions - the Forest Railroad. This miniature American railroad offers a choice of two mile-long routes and steam or diesel trains. The railroad is now open all winter with a diesel train running on one route on fine days whilst the other remains closed for routine annual maintenance.

The third main attraction - Adventureland - is also open all the year. There are five Swedish-designed adventure play areas - three of them in the forest. They include two exciting, totally enclosed slides, one of which is wide enough to take an accompanying adult. Wood chippings provide soft landings throughout Adventureland.

Other attractions that disabled visitors can enjoy as much as the able-bodied include a Hillbilly Shooting Gallery and Drive Your Own Model Boats. There are attractive picnic areas, a trading post, and diner, and cream teas are available.

Before long the stairs to the Model Railway are to be replaced by a long, gentle ramp, making the whole Theme Park accessible by wheelchair.

There are toilets for the disabled, and extensive free parking facilities for coaches and discounted rates for parties. One charge admits to all three main attractions and there are optional Family and Stroller tickets and reduced winter admission charges.

Further information from the proprietor, Mr John Southern: 0579 20325 or 21129.

● **London hotel rooms**

John Grooms Association for the Disabled has taken over the running of the Visitors Club which offers disabled members reduced rates at the London Tara Hotel. A number of rooms are specially adapted and fitted. They were financed by the London Hotel for Disabled people. The whole hotel is now very suitable for disabled people.

The standard room charge (single) is £54, but for members of the Club it is only £30 inclusive of VAT and continental breakfast.

It only costs £3 to become a Visitors Club member.

Full details from John Grooms Holidays, 10 Gloucester Drive, London N4 2LP. Tel: 01 802 7272

Pigeons rule the roost at Blackpool!

The British Homing World Show of the Year took place at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool on Saturday and Sunday January 23 and 24. The Liberal party, holding its convention on the same days, was 'banished' to a hotel on the outskirts.

Once again, thanks to the generosity of the Royal Pigeon Racing Association and its General Manager, Major Edward Camilleri, we were given a prime site for the ASBAH stall. The big attraction this year was a Teddy Bear Raffle which was popular amongst most people and addictive for some.

The show itself is on an impressive scale. The main hall, familiar to television viewers by reason of its use for party conferences, is filled with several thousand pigeons whose quiet behaviour and dignified demeanour compares favourably with those of the politicians. The balconies, galleries, secondary halls and foyers are filled with stalls selling everything a pigeon could possibly need - food, lofts, feeding and watering devices etc.

There is an atmosphere of relaxed friendliness amongst the thousands of people who pack the Winter Gardens for the show and our site next to the bar enhances the mood of goodwill in our customers.

Major Camilleri has indicated that a very substantial sum has been raised for us and for the other benefiting charity, the British Heart Foundation.

We are very aware of our good fortune in having such good friends as the Homing World Journal and the Royal Pigeon Racing Association.

Cruising to victory

Alan Matthews of Weymouth, Dorset raised the highest amount of sponsorship for a participant in the Beaujolais challenge - £5,000 an all time record. A cheque for ASBAH was presented to the Executive Director, Miss Moyna Gilbertson at the British Automobile Racing Club's 'Big Night Out' at Effingham Park, Sussex in February. The prize, donated by CTC lines, is a fly cruise to the Mediterranean which Alan and co-drivers are donating to Alan's parents.

COMING UP.....

- Conversationalist of the Year - April 23 and 24
- Ripon Race Day, April 30.

APPEALS NEWS

Carol Concert

Despite the appalling weather, the second ASBAH Carol Concert held in December at the American Church in Tottenham Court Road. proved to be very enjoyable - as were the mince pies and pumpkin pies provided afterwards in the crypt (or 'fellowship hall' in American!). The congregation included volunteers from our Hampshire shops who were entertained to tea before the service and thanked for their support for ASBAH by our Chairman Robin Mackenzie.



Above: Major Edward Camilleri (right), Show Manager of the British Homing World Show of the Year with Mr Castle of Banbury, winner of the ASBAH Cup for the Best Racing Pigeon in the Show

Right: ASBAH Appeals Organisers Richard Poole (left) and Roy Groom at the ASBAH stall at the British Homing World Show at Blackpool



Advertising

FOR THE USE OF LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER READERS

Rates: £3 for 30 words max; £4.25 for 30-45 words;
£5.50 for 45-60 words.

Cheque or postal order payable to 'ASBAH'

Adverts for the next LINK (May/June) should be in by
April 21. Send to: The Editor, Mrs Sue Gearing,
The Gables, Long Lane, Wrington, Avon, BS18 7NE.
Tel: 0934 862279

HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

BORTH, Nr Aberystwyth. 6-berth de luxe holiday home. Licensed site. Suitable for wheelchair users who live independently. Details: Mrs J. Carter, 1 Meadow Road, Craven Arms, Shropshire.

ISLE OF WIGHT. Very well equipped chalet with easy wheelchair access at **Brambles Chine, Freshwater.** Sleeps 6. Indoor heated pool, club, shop. Details: Ring or write: Mrs S. Gully, Old Princelett, Apse Heath, Sandown, Isle of Wight. Tel: 0983 863354

SELSEY, Sussex. Six berth purpose built fully equipped mobile home. Ramp access. Site near sea. Pool, club, etc. Details: Mrs C. Bugden, 27 The Grove, Sholing, Southampton SO2 9LT. Tel: 0703 444921.

PRIMROSE VALLEY Fully adapted luxury caravan. Sleeps 6. Bath/shower. Ramp. Many facilities on site; Details: Mr J. Adams, 105 Blakey Close, Redcar, Cleveland. Tel: Middlesborough 472920

DINGLE, Co. Kerry, Ireland. Four bedroom bungalow to let during June, July, August, September. Fully adapted for wheelchair users. Many beaches nearby. Three bathrooms - two of which are accessible for wheelchairs also. For details tel: 063 98269, or write: Tom Kennedy, Ballinagaddy North, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick, Ireland.

LOOE, Cornwall. Fully equipped, self-catering 2 bedroom bungalow. Sleeps 6. Site near sea with easy access to beach, shop and camp facilities. Easily accessible for wheelchairs. Details: Mr P. Cash. Tel: 0425 72055.

FAIRBOURNE. Very well equipped bungalow with easy wheelchair access. Two bedrooms. Sleeps 6. Self catering. Five minutes from beach. Details: Midland ASBAH. Tel: 021 771 0371.

Two luxury bungalows, fully adapted for wheelchairs, set among magnificent pine trees in the heart of Clwyd, yet minutes from old market town of Mold. Lovely private south-facing gardens, patio, barbeque, telephone etc. Sleep 4/6.

Brochure: Mrs Lynne Dowling, 23 Gleneagles Road, Great Sutton, South Wirral. Tel: 051 339 5316 or 051 355 1005

Whilst every care is taken to ensure accuracy of information published in LINK, the publishers can accept no liability. Opinions expressed in articles are not necessarily those of ASBAH

EXCHANGE AND MART

BEC SUPASCOOTA. 7 months old. Used only twice. Cost £1,195. Will accept £600 o.n.o. Contact: Mrs N. Arkley, 15 Trool Court, Doxford Park, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear. Tel: Sunderland 5200354

SPEEDWELL SUPAKART BATTERY CAR. Ideally suited 7-12 year old. Excellent condition. Approx. 2 years old. £500. Contact: Stuart Goodridge. Tel: 0803 862007 day, and 0392 70860 evenings. (Exeter, Devon).

ORTHO KINETIC INVALID CHAIR. Suit child 5-10 years. Can be placed on front passenger seat of car without removing child. Raincape, shopping bag. Offers. Tel: Glastonbury 0458 32511.

ORTOPEDIA POWER DRIVE WHEELCHAIR BY EVEREST AND JENNINGS. Almost new. Only approx 57 miles. £1,000. Also for sale: new **RORO CUSHION.** £200. Contact Mrs Craven, Bentley Cottage, John Street, Utkinton, Nr Tarporley, Cheshire. Tel: Tarporley 2773.

BEC SUPASCOOTA. Blue. Never used. £1,215 new. Offers? Contact Jill Mason, 16 Arundel Road, Peacehaven, E. Sussex. BN9 8SD. Tel: 07914 6368.

SOUTH WEST LONDON COLLEGE COUNSELLING SECTION

SKILLS FOR DISABLED COUNSELLORS

Introductory courses in Counselling skills for people with disabilities and those working in the field of disability.

Residential course, May 31-June 2, 1988
All Saints Pastoral centre, St Albans, Herts.
FEE: Approx £60.

Evening course every Wed. 6.30-9 pm
starts Feb 3 1988. Until June 1.
at 48 Boundary Road, Lodon NW8
FEE: Approx 43.40
The courses can be attended individually or in conjunction.
Details: The Secretary South West London College Counselling Section, Wyvil Road Annexe, Wyvil Road, London SW8 2TJ. Tel: 01 720 7553.

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BARNSELEY

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Mrs Liz Selby,
The Old Police Station,
Woodbridge Road
Guildford
Tel: Guildford 57136

HAMPSHIRE SOUTH

Mr S R Baker,
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Southsea, Portsmouth, Hants. POY 8QW
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Tel: Letchworth 676706

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Mrs J V Brook,
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Tel: 0484 21776

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Hull. HU6 7IX
Tel: Hull 857165

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Mrs Judith Bedford,
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