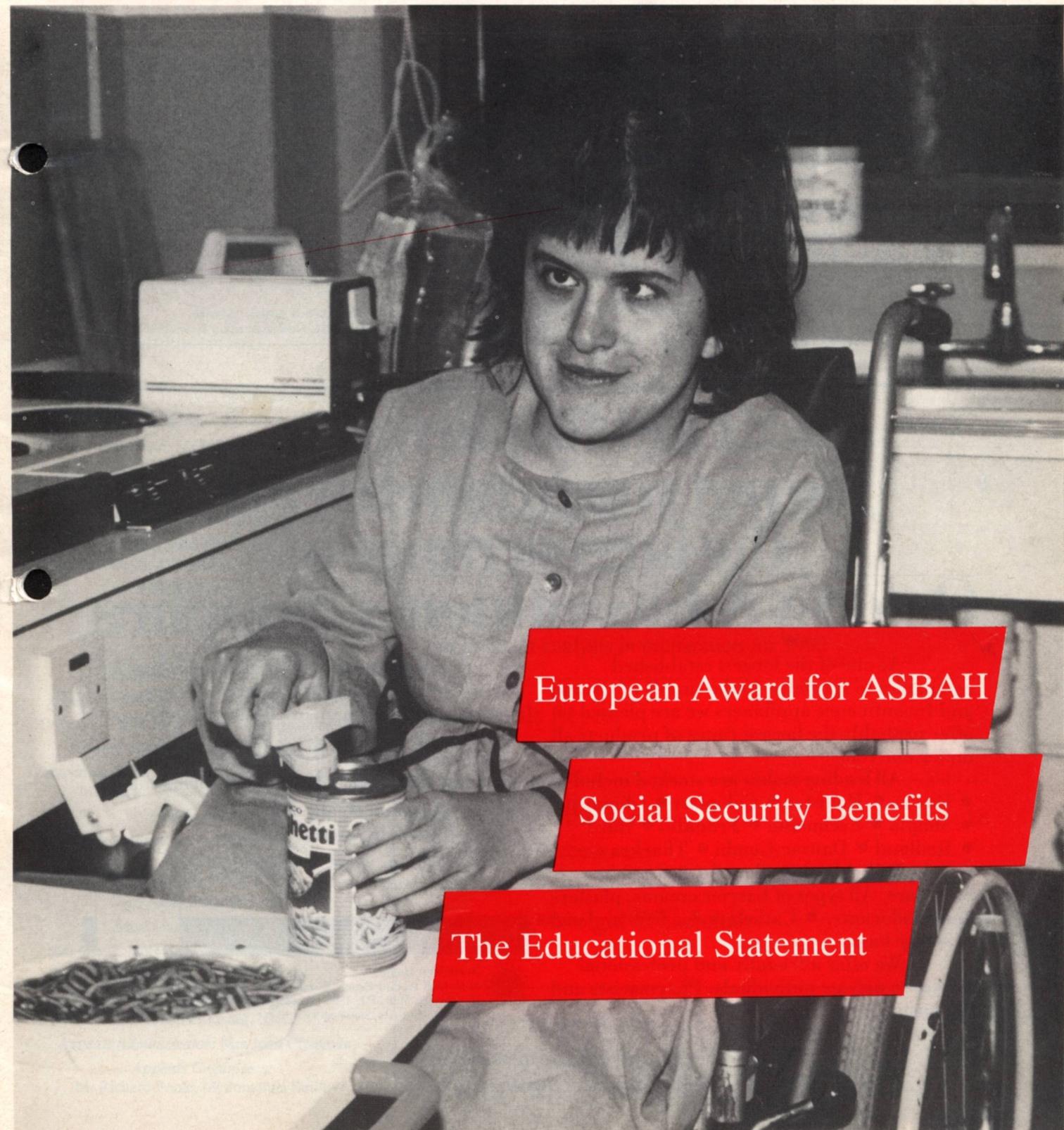


Link



European Award for ASBAH

Social Security Benefits

The Educational Statement



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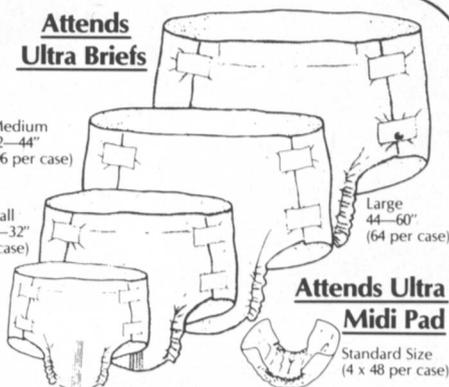
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DECEMBER 1989

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Cover Picture: 26 year old Carolyn Wood preparing a meal as part of her independence training programme in a new Denton View Flatlet at Five Oaks Centre. Photograph by Paul Loosley

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ASBAH HONOURED IN BRUSSELS BY HELIOS AWARD

The Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus is being presented with a HELIOS Project award in Brussels on 8th December 1989. Moyna Gilbertson, Executive Director, and Joan Pheasant, Five Oaks Manager, are present at the award ceremony. In this article, Carolyn Smith, ASBAH's Accommodation Officer, describes the unique work carried out at Five Oaks.

HELIOS means Handicapped People in the European Community Living Independently in Open Society. The aim of the HELIOS Programme is to provide a pragmatic response to the increasing needs and new aspirations of disabled people with a view to promoting social and economic integration and independent living.

This award comes in recognition of Five Oaks Centre within the housing category which includes care and family support services. Denton View and Wharfedale are two recently completed buildings, aiming to provide young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus with the opportunity to develop skills towards self care.

Denton View and Wharfedale form a unique programme of independence training which begins within the Five Oaks Residential Centre. The programme aims to help people develop their own care skills so that they may make autonomous decisions about their living environment.



Keep Fit class for residents taken by physiotherapist Felicity Phipps.

The new project is situated within the grounds of Five Oaks, ASBAH's residential centre. Five Oaks is used by short stay residents, providing respite or holiday care, short stay training courses and a variety of activity courses



Wharfedale, built by Sanctuary Housing Association, provides secure tenancy in fully-adapted flats.

throughout the year. The courses on offer to young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus include indoor activities, driving assessments, mini-independence training, fashion courses, international wildlife and fishing weekends, dance and drama.

The Towards Self Care programme is an extended training programme primarily shaped and directed by the young disabled person. The programme is open to people over 18 years of age and offers complete flexibility in independence training by allowing the individual to decide at which stage to begin. ASBAH staff provide help and advice to young people when making decisions regarding the format of the Towards Self Care programme.

Stage 1 of the programme, which takes place within Five Oaks can last up to three months if felt to be necessary and focuses upon the personal care skills of the individual. The training programme will be agreed between the staff and the individual but emphasis

will be placed on bathing, dressing and dealing with toileting needs.

The emphasis is placed upon personal care and hygiene because this is an area which has proved to be a major problem for many people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus. Being able to deal with one's own personal care needs or to direct a carer removes dependence upon medical professionals and breaks down the social barriers around incontinence.

Once the disabled individual has attained a certain level of personal care which allows them to recognise and meet their personal care needs independently they are then encouraged to move on to Denton View.

Denton View, built by Sanctuary Housing Association, consists of four self-contained flatlets on two levels. The upper storey is accessible to wheelchair users via a 'bridge' attached to the upper storey of Five Oaks. Each flatlet has its own front door, a

living/sleeping area, kitchen and bathroom/W.C. Each flat is fully accessible to a wheelchair user and great care had been taken to ensure flexibility within the design.

The kitchens contain height adjustable work tops and units including a two ring hob unit.

In the bathroom area, Manga Booster hoists are available or shallow baths should the resident require this and each wash basin is integral with a height adjustable vanity unit.

Each flatlet is 'colour coded'; red, blue, green, yellow, in order to help the resident remember which items belong in each flatlet. The colour coding has also provided good areas of colour contrast on door handles and grabrails which has aided those people with partial sight or perceptual problems.

The aim of Denton View is to provide long term independence training to people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus within a 'secure' yet independent housing environment.

Many young people do not have the opportunity to experience managing their own home for a temporary period before making a full-time commitment. Denton View allows young people to do this and to feel confident about experiencing independent living knowing that help, support and guidance is available.

The Towards Self Care programme within Denton View continues for a further six months if required. During this time residents begin to develop other skills in home management; cleaning, shopping, laundry, mobility and budgeting. Although the majority of training is on a one-to-one basis, group sessions, often led by an external speaker, provide individuals with knowledge and experience of wider social and personal issues such as keep-fit, nutrition, employment and personal relationships.

Even though a resident is participating in the Towards Self Care programme they are encouraged to take up community, employment and educational activities in the local area.

The Towards Self Care programme may continue in a less structured format within Wharfedale, a two storey development situated near to Five Oaks

Residential Centre. Wharfedale aims to provide an environment in which not only residents of Denton View but other young disabled people may experience different types of housing and support services.

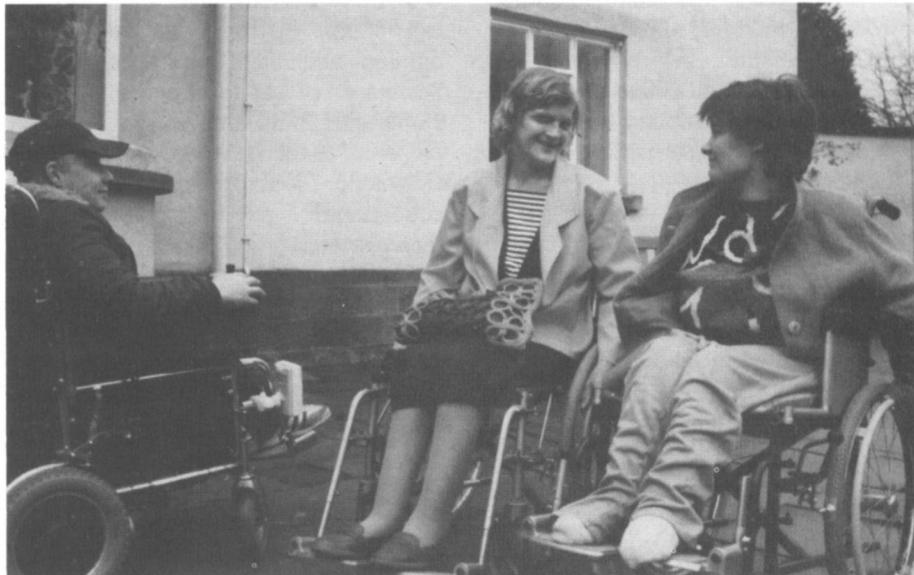
Wharfedale is a fully wheelchair accessible building consisting of: two one bedroom self-contained flats, a two bedroom flat and a three bedroom flat. The scheme is essentially aimed at young single people and the three bedroom flat is strictly for this purpose and not for a family.

The design and fixtures of each flat is similar to Denton View with height adjustable equipment and the policy of flexibility adopted throughout.

statutory home help to give domestic support, General Practitioner services and District Nursing services.

Wharfedale encourages the continued development towards independent living within a supportive environment. Essentially the development gives young people the opportunity to experience sharing accommodation thereby developing social and communal skills often unavailable to them, due to lack of suitable shared housing options. This sharing environment also gives young people the chance to understand the importance of interdependence on other members of their peer group.

ASBAH ensures that transport is



Paul Dean, Anita Cocksedge and Carol Aburn talking in the grounds of Five Oaks.

Each resident is a tenant of Sanctuary Housing Association. They are, therefore, allowed to remain at Wharfedale indefinitely although tenants are supported if they wish to seek housing in another area and withdraw support further.

Tenants do not receive any formal training or programme. Instead, a project worker is available to provide support and guidance on a number of issues integral to social services, medical services and personal care. Tenants can receive emergency help through the call system linked to Five Oaks.

Other support services to tenants of Wharfedale are provided by community services and include

available to residents of the project to get to Ben Rhydding the nearest village, Ilkley, Leeds and other surrounding towns, however, residents are encouraged to drive and parking space is made available throughout the project.

The project became fully operational in December 1988 and has already seen several young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus develop at different rates of achievement. The project has begun to demonstrate that it is able to meet the variety of needs, goals and aspirations that young disabled people have in the whole experience of 'independent living'.

Photographs by Paul Loosley

IMPLICATIONS OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

An Educational Statement under the 1981 Education Act is a legal document. Susan Fenton, ASBAH's Education, Training and Employment Coordinator is aware that statementing can be a traumatic process and sees her role as easing the burden.

For too many parents of school aged children with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus the word 'statement' is enough to spark off feelings of anger and frustration. Parents continue to press their Local Education Authority to undertake the statementing procedure. However, those who have been successful in obtaining a Statement have found it biased towards certain aspects of disability and failing to address a child's particular learning difficulty.

Before elaborating it is necessary to examine some of the changes provided for in the 1988 Education Act. The following issues are most relevant:

- The National Curriculum
- Assessment
- Local Management of Schools

Both the National Curriculum and Assessment have received considerable press coverage. All but a very small percentage of children will follow the National Curriculum and receive regular assessment. Those excluded will be children who fall into one of two categories. Firstly children whose Educational Statements identify needs that cannot be met and secondly, children who require a temporary exemption because of hospitalisation or illness. This means that only a very small percentage of children with particular learning difficulties will be excluded. Extra time is being given to Local Education Authorities to modify Educational Statements to ensure that the wording of Statements does not exclude a child who could benefit from the National Curriculum. For children where parts of the National Curriculum are inappropriate, the LEA's must specify learning difficulties that cannot be addressed by the National

Curriculum. Exemption from parts will therefore be written into Educational Statements.

Parents are finding that new Statements bear little resemblance to previous versions. Statements are also being prepared and issued to children who have not previously had one. Parents should read the draft very carefully and if the document fails to address important learning difficulties they must seek help from an organisation like ASBAH.

It must be remembered that LEA's can choose to discount the second opinion and that an Appeal to the Secretary of State frequently fails. However LEA's are listening to well prepared challenges especially if they are made by an independent expert, educational psychologist, speech therapist etc.

Statements also have important implications for assessment of the National Curriculum. For example, children whose motor skills exempt them from handwriting, would not be exempted from attaining other targets under 'communication skills', because they would be allowed to use a computer and word-processing facilities.

Assessment provides an opportunity for evaluating the learning process. Parents too often fail to see degrees of development gained. Assessment can help teachers to evaluate potential and address any particular difficulties.

LEA's will try to ensure that all children start the National Curriculum at the same time, however there is no legal requirement for unstatemented children to do so until September 1990.

The 1988 Education Act also changes the relationship between school and Local Education Authority. Local Management of schools is a complex affair requiring an article in its own right. The full implications of Local Management Schools are not yet known, but there is an agreement about certain issues. Firstly LEA's are not going to have more resources available for special Educational needs.

Certainly they are likely to have fewer specialist professionals. Therefore it is more likely that children whose needs are specified on a Statement will be given priority, where resources are available. As an Educational Psychologist reminded me recently: 'A statement does not guarantee extra provision'. However, it does increase a child's chances of obtaining scarce resources.

To summarise, it is important to read carefully part (a) of the draft statement before signing the document. The LEA must give parents the opportunity to make modifications if their child's needs are not accurately reflected. A 28 day period is allowed for objections.

Part (b) of the Statement: the school specified by the LEA to satisfy the needs identified in part (a) can be challenged by parents. However the 1981 and 1988 Act state that LEA's must take account of the resource implications in their allocation of school. For many children this can mean travelling to a distant mainstream school for secondary education. Sometimes a compromise can be achieved, especially if the parents can prove that the local school would be the long-term cheaper option. To do this parents must have the backing of the local community, particularly that of the Head-teacher of the school requested.

It is not possible to emphasise too strongly the importance of involvement in the local community, and having others on your side is imperative, particularly if bureaucracy and Education Committee policies are to be challenged.

The Educational Statement will continue to be a double edged sword, either a means for greater access to resources and the National Curriculum or a major obstacle preventing a child's real learning difficulties from being addressed.

Susan Fenton would be pleased to support parents on an individual basis.

NAIDEX



Picture Caption: Phillip Watson, Disabled Living Services Manager, offering advice at NAIDEX

ASBAH were one of about 300 organisations and businesses to take advantage of exhibiting at NAIDEX, the International Exhibition of Equipment and Services for the disabled and elderly, held at London's Alexandra Palace from 11 to 13 October.

Having started in 1973 with a small exhibition in Brighton, NAIDEX has grown steadily in size each year. This year, NAIDEX occupied 9,000 square metres of stand space. Rows of stands displayed books, posters, catalogues and leaflets, together with an

outstanding array of glossy and hi-tech equipment from the smallest electronic devices to assist communication, through to wheelchairs, hoists, lifts and even cars. Every room of the house was represented by displays of the latest modified kitchens, bathrooms, bedrooms and living rooms. Exhibitors demonstrated the latest educational aids, colourful toys and mobility products and promoted their holidays, financial services and publications. It was estimated that attendance figures surpassed those of last year—17,300 over three days.

ASBAH's own attractive stand drew interest from people with spina bifida and hydrocephalus, their families and friends, professionals working in the area of disability, and other passers-by. Members of the Disabled Living Advisory Service distributed information about spina bifida and hydrocephalus, as well as answering specific questions and publicizing ASBAH's imminent move to their new Peterborough headquarters.

The success of NAIDEX has delighted the organisers, who have witnessed this industry change in emphasis towards equipping disabled people for a more independent lifestyle. John Naude, of ASBAH's Disabled Living Advisory Service noted that while many products were not new ideas, the products had been manufactured in new styles and colours, allowing for greater exercise of personal taste when making a choice. Handrails, for example, were displayed in a range of shapes and colours to suit most homes.

NAIDEX will stage three exhibitions in 1990—Glasgow in March, Birmingham in May, and London in October. ASBAH is hoping to repeat this year's success at NAIDEX in 1990.

LOCAL ASSOCIATION NEWS

Bolton and Bury

Bolton and Bury ASBAH Branch have recently presented two cheques to the value of £500.00 each. One went to Booth Hall Hospital and the other to Manchester Childrens' Hospital.

Pictured in the photograph are Mrs G Winstanley, Chairperson and Mr David Clyne, Secretary with representatives from both hospitals.



ADVANTAGES AND PITFALLS OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT

The Prince of Wales Advisory Group on Disablement recently organised a seminar on self-employment. The conference hoped to enlighten young people under 30 about the advantages and pitfalls of self-employment. Susan Fenton, ASBAH's Education, Training and Employment Coordinator went along to this special day.

Self-employment is a big step for anyone to take. The seminar sought to highlight the process of transfer from unemployment and being in receipt of Invalidity Benefit to self-employment and further independence.

There is a tremendous amount of free advice available to any individual who believes they have an idea that is commercially viable. Expert advice can be accessed immediately from the Enterprise Agency. Each county has its own Enterprise Agency funded largely by the Government. The Jobcentres, Public Libraries and Citizen Advice Bureaux have their phone number. The Enterprise Agency can give free advice on any aspect of starting up a business. Everything from analysing whether the idea is commercially feasible to helping in promotion, marketing, accounting, finance and funding.

Anyone of any age can obtain help from the Enterprise Agency. In addition to this help the Training Agency runs training courses of its own for those interested in self-employment. Attendance on such a course should not affect any benefit providing that the course is of a short duration. Most introductory courses to self-employment are one or two day seminars. More specific courses i.e. marketing or finance for those contemplating self-employment are of ten day duration, often one evening or day a week for a series of weeks. Therefore such courses would not affect benefit and are an opportunity for anyone thinking about self-employment to explore the possibility without commitment.

There are also financial benefits in becoming self-employed for anyone who has been unemployed for a long period in the form of an Enterprise Allowance. The current Enterprise Allowance is £40 a week, payable over one year. Many benefits would stop or

be affected once Enterprise Allowance is paid and should the business not work out a lower rate of Invalidity Benefit would be paid in the initial period. However, each individual's circumstances are unique depending upon their age, whether they are married, have children etc. A free advice line is available from the Department of Social Security. Without giving one's name, merely describe your case and they will advise on the benefits that would be affected. Before looking on the debit side, explore the positive side and sample free courses and the help of the Enterprise Agency.

Without grit, persistence and a good business idea, self-employment should not be contemplated.

Anyone under 30 years of age is eligible for loan or bursary from the Prince's Youth Business Trust. Whilst comparatively small amounts are available this financial help can greatly assist a small business. As with any business loan, those loaning the money need to be satisfied that the business idea is sound and that business generated will be sufficient to repay the loan. One advantage of the loans given by the Prince's Youth Business Trust is

that the period of the loan is three years and that no interest is paid for the first year. During the second and third years rates of 5% and 10% are paid. A bursary of up to £1,000 and loan up to £5,000 can be given.

Perhaps more valuable than the help with funding a small business is the on-going help given through the Prince's Youth Business Trust to anyone it decides to fund. A Business Adviser is available to help each young person. The Adviser operates from one of 35 regional boards that cover England and Wales. There are 2,000 advisers throughout the Country and these cooperate closely with the Enterprise Agencies to access skills training and professional advice.

Since its foundation in 1987 The Prince's Youth Business Trust has helped support some 6,500 businesses which now employ 10,000 people. Over 30,000 people have been counselled since its formation. However, there is an awareness that only 10% of all the young people are disabled. Fewer adults over 30 seek help from the Enterprise Agencies. There are not many statistics available, but it is estimated that less than 0.5% of those with a disability even explore the possibility of self-employment.

Without a great deal of grit and determination, persistence and not least a good business idea, self-employment should not be contemplated.

Countdown to Self-Employment

- ❑ Seek all information/go on courses/prepare your strategy before you take the plunge.
- ❑ Convince GP to sign you 'fit for work'.
- ❑ Through the Department of Social Security negotiate on the benefits you will keep and come-off including Invalidity Benefit.
- ❑ Through the Department of Employment sign on unemployed in order to claim: 'Enterprise Allowance'. This is taxable so it is a good idea to contact the Inland Revenue Tax Office.

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS PULL OUT

The current situation

On 25th October, as part of the annual up-rating statement, the Minister for Social Security—Tony Newton—announced that £100 million is to be put into disability benefits. He made it clear that this is not really new money, in the sense of having come from outside the social security system, but instead it represents a proportion of the money that had been saved through freezing child benefit for the third year running.

Up-rating of benefits each year is required by law, in order to keep benefits in line with the rise in prices. This time the majority of benefits will be increased by 7.6% (the current inflation level) with means tested benefits increasing by 5.2% as a notional amount for housing costs is subtracted. These changes will be in effect from April 1990.

Some of the additional changes announced are very welcome, indeed many years have been spent in campaigning to bring them about. But we are still left with a system which is highly complex and inherently discriminatory; where eligibility for benefits depends more on when or how someone became disabled as opposed to degree of severity of disability. Furthermore, the levels of benefit are still far too low to adequately meet need.

The Government has been promising for many years to hold a comprehensive review of disability benefits once it had information on the prevalence of disability, disabled people's financial circumstances, and their use of services. The results of the surveys it commissioned in 1984 are now known, yet no indication has been given of when this comprehensive review is to take place.

The surveys show that the number of disabled people is far in excess of previous estimates and provide evidence of the poverty in which many disabled people exist. In this context, the recent piecemeal changes and the comparatively small amount of money allocated appear thoroughly inadequate. A comprehensive review, of the disability benefits system and the levels of benefits is desperately needed, and it is vital that disabled people and their organisations are fully involved throughout the review process.

In the following summary of benefits, new levels (from April 1990) and other amendments are in bold type.

Summary of social security benefits currently available for people with disabilities

Benefits Payable When Not In Work

Statutory sick pay (SSP)—payable to employees for first 28 weeks of incapacity for work. Administered by employers. Eligibility mainly depends on incapacity for work and average weekly earnings. Taxable and subject to deductions for national insurance contributions.

Weekly rates

£36.25 if average weekly earnings are between £43.00 and £83.99.

£52.10 if average weekly earnings are £84.00 or more.

New weekly rates:

£39.25 if average weekly earnings are between £46.00 and £124.99.

£52.50 if average weekly earnings are £125.00 or more.

Sickness benefit (DSS leaflet no: NI 16)—payable for first 28 weeks of incapacity for work where you do not qualify for SSP. Eligibility depends on incapacity for work and having the right national insurance record in the right tax year. Taxfree.

Weekly rates

Claimant	£33.20	(£35.70)
Adult dependant	£20.55	(£22.10)
Child dependant	£00.00	(£00.00)

Incapacity Benefit (DSS leaflet no: NI 16A)—for people who have been incapable of work for at least 28 weeks. Eligibility depends on continuing incapacity for work and having the right national insurance record. Taxfree. Made up of incapacity pension, plus an age-related or earnings related allowance.

Weekly rates

Incapacity pension:		
Claimant	£43.60	(£46.90)
Adult dependant	£26.20	(£28.20)
Child dependant	£ 8.95	(£ 9.65)

Incapacity allowance (depends on age at which incapacity began):

Under 40	£ 9.20	(£10.00)
At least 40 but under 50	£ 5.80	(£ 6.20)
At least 50 but under 60 (men) or under 55 (women)	£ 2.90	(£ 3.10)
60+ (men) or 55+ (women) – no age allowance		

Earnings related addition:

For those who have been working as an employee. Based on earnings on which you paid class 1 NI contributions after 6.4.1978. Calculated in the same way as the state earnings related pension scheme (SERPS). In 1989 the DHSS calculates that the maximum amount anyone could receive is £41.71 per week. The average amount paid is less than £5.00 per week.

The amount which people on Incapacity Benefit can earn without affecting that Benefit, provided the work is medically certified as beneficial will go up from £28.50 to £35.00 per week.

Severe disablement allowance (DSS leaflet no: NI 252)—non-contributory taxfree benefit for people who have been incapable of work for at least 28 weeks but do not have enough national insurance contributions to qualify them for sickness and incapacity benefit. People who become incapable of work before the age of

20 have to meet a single test of incapacity for work. Those who become incapable of work after 20 have to meet an additional test of 80 per cent or more disablement.

Weekly rates

Claimant	£26.20	(£28.20)
Adult dependant	£15.65	(£16.85)
Child dependant	£ 8.95	(£ 9.65)

The amount which people on Severe Disablement Allowance can earn without affecting that Benefit, providing the work is medically certified as beneficial will go up from £28.50 to £35.00 per week.

Unemployment benefit (DSS leaflet no: NI 12)—taxable benefit for people out of work but capable of, available for and actively seeking work. Eligibility depends on paying the right national insurance contributions in the right tax year. Payable for up to one year.

Weekly rates

Claimant	£34.70	(£37.35)
Adult dependant	£21.40	(£23.05)
Child dependant	£00.00	(£00.00)

Retirement pension (DSS leaflet no: NP 32)—taxable benefit for people over pension age (60 for women, 65 for men.) Rate depends on the amount of national insurance contributions paid during your working life. Consists of basic pension and an earnings related addition (SERPS).

Weekly rates (basic pension)

Claimant	£43.60	(£46.90)
Adult dependant	£26.20	(£28.20)
Child dependant	£ 8.95 (tax free)	(£ 9.65)

Means-tested Benefits

Entitlement to a means-tested benefit depends on a person's savings and incomes falling within certain levels. There are three types of benefit:

- Income support; family credit – for weekly living costs**
- Housing benefit – for rent and/or rates/poll tax**

Where a person meets the qualifying conditions for these benefits—such as hours working, savings, age—their income is compared to a set level laid down by Parliament each year. Each of these three benefits use a different method of calculating the amount to be paid.

Income support

Income support replaced supplementary benefit in April 1988. It can be paid to people aged sixteen and over who are not in work, or who work for less than 24 hours per week, whose weekly incomes are below a set level—their applicable amount. This is based on a series of personal allowances and 'client group' premiums. If your income is lower than your 'applicable amount' (according to levels set down in law) then the difference is payable as income support, as long as you meet any other qualifying conditions (eg savings under £6000).

For the purposes of calculating someone's income support entitlement, income maintenance benefits e.g. invalidity benefit,

sickness benefit, invalid care allowance, severe disablement allowance, retirement pension, and unemployment benefit, are counted as income.

A single disabled person aged between 18 and 25 without children, for example, could qualify for £41.10 in total as their applicable amount for income support i.e. this would be the amount their weekly income would be topped up to (assuming they qualify for the basic income support disability premium). A couple over 25 but below pension age and without children could qualify for £74.30 (assuming one of them qualifies for the basic disability premium).

Some changes will be made to income support premiums. The disabled child premium will be increased to the same rate as the adult's disability premium. The adult disability premium will be increased by 13%.

A new carers' premium worth £10.00 per week is to be introduced for carers in receipt of Invalid Care Allowance.

Family credit

Family credit replaced family income supplement (FIS) in April 1988. It is payable to families (single parents or couples) on modest wages, who have children, where a parent works for 24 hours or more per week. Family credit provides a top-up to maximum levels laid down by Parliament, based on a family's 'applicable amount'.

Housing benefit

Housing benefit (HB) gives help with paying rent and/or rates and is operated by local authorities according to regulations laid down by Parliament.

It has similar—but not identical—rules to income support, with people's applicable amount being made up by a series of personal allowances and client group premiums. It is payable whether in or out of work, but is affected by the level of wages paid. The income maintenance benefits are counted as income, as well as net wages, when calculating entitlement to housing benefit.

The maximum amount of HB (to cover 100% of rent and 80% of rates) is payable to those on income support (or with an equivalent or lower income). People whose net weekly incomes are higher than their applicable amount get proportionately less housing benefit as their income rises.

Care and Mobility Needs

Attendance allowance (DSS leaflet no: NI 205)—taxfree benefit for adults and children, aged 2 or over, who are severely disabled—either physically or mentally—and have needed a lot of looking after for at least 6 months. The disabled person does not actually have to have a carer in order to qualify. Payable at 2 rates—higher rate paid to people who meet the qualifying conditions both during the day and the night; lower rate paid to people who meet the conditions during either the day or the night. It is not counted as income when working out entitlement to income support and housing benefit.

Weekly rates

Lower rate	£23.30	(£25.05)
Higher rate	£34.90	(£37.55)

The eligibility criteria for Attendance Allowance are to be extended so that children under the age of two will be entitled. The usual six month waiting period will be abolished for people who are terminally ill ('terminally ill' has still to be defined).

Invalid care allowance (DSS leaflet no: NI 212)—taxable benefit for people of working age who cannot work because they are caring for a disabled person. To qualify, the carer must be spending at least 35 hours a week caring for a person who receives attendance allowance, or the constant attendance allowance paid under the war or industrial compensation schemes. Counted as income when working out entitlement to means-tested benefits.

Weekly rates

Claimant	£26.20	(£28.20)
Adult dependant or housekeeper	£15.65	(£16.85)
Child dependant	£ 8.95	(£ 9.65)

As more people will be able to claim Attendance Allowance, more will become entitled to Invalid Care Allowance.

The amount that people in receipt of ICA can earn without affecting that Benefit will increase from £12.00 to £20.00 per week.

Mobility allowance (DSS leaflet no: NI 211)—taxfree benefit for severely disabled people aged between 5 and 80 who are either unable to walk, virtually unable to walk, or for whom the exertion required to walk constitutes a danger to life or is likely to lead to a serious deterioration in health. To qualify you must be likely to meet these medical conditions for at least one year and have been resident in the UK for 12 of the past 18 months. A first claim for mobility allowance must be made before the 66th birthday. Not counted as income when working out entitlement to income support and housing benefit.

Weekly rate

Claimant	£24.40	(£26.25)
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The eligibility criteria for Mobility Allowance are to be extended so that people who are deaf/blind can qualify.

Independent Living Fund

The Independent Living Fund is a Government-funded trust fund and not a State benefit. It is designed to 'provide help to some severely disabled people who need domestic support if they are to live in their own homes.' No disabled person has a statutory right to money from the fund and equally there is no right of appeal if money is not awarded. However payments can be generous where conditions are satisfied and awards are judged to be appropriate.

For more information and an application form, write to: the Independent Living Fund, PO Box 183, Nottingham, NG8 3RD.

For further information on these and other benefits see the Disability Rights Handbook, price £3.75 postfree, available from The Disability Alliance E.R.A., 25 Denmark Street, London WC2 8NJ.

Sally Wücher
Campaign Worker
Disability Alliance

Schedule of main proposed Social Security benefit rates from April 1990

Weekly rates unless otherwise shown	Old rates 1989	New rates 1990
<i>Attendance allowance</i>		
higher rate	34.90	37.55
lower rate	23.30	25.05
<i>Child benefit - each child</i>	7.25	7.25
<i>Child's special allowance</i>	8.95	9.65
<i>Community charge benefit</i>		
<i>Personal allowances</i>		
single		
18 to 24	27.40	28.80
20 or over	34.90	36.70
lone parent - 18 or over	34.90	36.70
couple - one or both over 18	54.80	57.60
dependent children		
under 11	11.75	12.35
11 to 15	17.35	18.25
16 to 17	20.80	21.90
18	27.40	28.80
<i>Premiums</i>		
family	6.50	7.35
lone parent	8.60	9.70
pensioner		
single	11.20	11.80
couple	17.05	17.95
pensioner (enhanced)		
single	13.70	14.40
couple	20.55	21.60
pensioner (higher)		
single	16.20	17.05
couple	23.00	24.25
disability		
single	13.70	15.40
couple	19.50	22.10
severe disability		
single	26.20	28.20
couple (one qualifies)	26.20	28.20
couple (both qualify)	52.40	56.40
disabled child	6.50	15.40
carers (from October 1990)		10.00
Allowance for personal expenses for claimants in hospital	8.70	11.75
<i>Capital</i>		
upper limit	8,000.00	8,000.00

<i>Weekly rates unless otherwise shown</i>	<i>Old rates 1989</i>	<i>New rates 1990</i>
amount disregarded child's limit	3,000.00	3,000.00
Tariff income £1 for every complete £250 or part thereof between amount of capital disregarded and capital upper limit		
Earnings disregards		
where disability premium awarded various specified employments	15.00	15.00
lone parent – in receipt of IS	15.00	15.00
lone parent – not in receipt of IS (from October 1990)	15.00	25.00
where the claimant has a partner	10.00	10.00
single claimant	5.00	5.00
Other income disregards		
war disablement pension and war widows pension	5.00	10.00
voluntary and charitable payments	5.00	5.00
student's covenanted income	5.00	5.00
Expenses for subtenants		
furnished or unfurnished	4.00	4.00
where heating is included, additional	7.00	7.35
Dependency increases		
Adult Dependency increases		
For spouse or person looking after children with:-		
retirement pension on own insurance		
invalidity pension, unemployability supplement and, if beneficiary over pension age, unemployment benefit non-contributory retirement pension, invalid care allowance and severe disablement allowance	26.20	28.20
sickness benefit if beneficiary		
over pension age	25.10	27.00
unemployment benefit	21.40	23.05
maternity allowance/sickness benefit	20.55	22.10
Child Dependency increases		
For each child with:-		
retirement pension, widows benefit, invalidity benefit, invalid care allowance, severe disablement allowance, higher rate industrial death benefit, unemployability supplement and sickness/unemployment benefit if beneficiary over pension age	8.95	9.65
Earnings rules		
Invalid care allowance	12.00	20.00
Unemployment benefit (daily rate)	2.00	2.00
Therapeutic earnings limit	28.50	35.00
Industrial injuries unemployability		

<i>Weekly rates unless otherwise shown</i>	<i>Old rates 1989</i>	<i>New rates 1990</i>
supplement permitted earnings level (annual amount)	1,482.00	1,820.00
War pensioners' unemployability supplement permitted earnings level (annual amount)	1,482.00	1,820.00
Adult dependency increases with sickness benefit where claimant is		
(a) under pension age	20.55	22.10
(b) over pension age	25.10	27.00
maternity allowance	20.55	22.10
unemployment benefit where claimant is		
(a) under pension age	21.40	23.05
(b) over pension age	26.20	28.20
retirement pension, invalidity pension, severe disablement allowance, unemployment supplement where dependant		
(a) is living with claimant	34.70	37.35
(b) still qualifies for the tapered earnings rule	45.09	45.09
retirement pension, invalidity pension and unemployability supplement where dependant not living with claimant	26.20	28.20
severe disablement allowance where dependant not living with claimant	15.65	16.85
invalid care allowance	15.65	16.85
Child dependency increases		
level at which CDIs payable with long-term benefits are affected by earnings of claimant's spouse or partner		
for first child	95.00	100.00
for each subsequent child	12.00	13.00
Family credit		
Adult credit	33.60	36.50
Child credit		
under 11	7.30	8.25
11 to 15	12.90	14.15
16 to 17	16.35	17.80
18	23.30	25.10
Applicable amount (ie taper threshold)	54.80	57.60
Capital		
upper limit	6,000.00	6,000.00
amount disregarded	3,000.00	3,000.00
child's limit	3,000.00	3,000.00
Tariff income		
£1 for every complete £250 or part thereof between amount of capital disregarded and capital upper limit		

<i>Weekly rates unless otherwise shown</i>	<i>Old rates 1989</i>	<i>New rates 1990</i>
<i>Housing benefit</i>		
<i>Personal allowances</i>		
single 16 to 24	27.40	28.80
25 or over	34.90	36.70
<i>lone parent</i>		
under 18	27.40	28.80
18 or over	34.90	36.70
<i>couple</i>		
both under 18	41.60	43.80
one or both over 18	54.80	57.60
<i>dependent children</i>		
under 11	11.75	12.35
11 to 15	17.35	18.25
16 to 17	20.80	21.90
18	27.40	28.80
<i>Premiums</i>		
<i>family</i>		
	6.50	7.35
<i>lone parent</i>		
	6.60	9.70
<i>pensioner</i>		
single	11.20	11.80
couple	17.05	17.95
<i>pensioner (enhanced)</i>		
single	13.70	14.40
couple	20.55	21.60
<i>pensioner (higher)</i>		
single	16.20	17.05
couple	23.00	24.25
<i>disability</i>		
single	13.70	15.40
couple	19.50	22.10
<i>severe disability</i>		
single	26.20	28.20
couple (one qualifies)	26.20	28.20
couple (both qualify)	52.40	56.40
<i>disabled child carers (from October 1990)</i>		
	6.50	15.40
		10.00
<i>Allowance for personal expenses for claimants in hospital</i>		
	8.70	11.75
<i>Non-dependent deductions</i>		
<i>rent rebates and allowances aged 18 or over and in remunerative work</i>		
	9.15	10.85
<i>others, aged 18 or over, or on Income Support and over 25</i>		
	3.85	4.55
<i>low earnings threshold</i>		
	52.10	56.05
<i>Service charges for fuel</i>		
heating	7.00	7.35
hot water	0.85	0.90

<i>Weekly rates unless otherwise shown</i>	<i>Old rates 1989</i>	<i>New rates 1990</i>
lighting	0.55	0.60
cooking	0.85	0.90
all fuel	9.25	9.75
<i>Amount ineligible for meals</i>		
<i>three or more meals a day</i>		
single claimant	12.50	13.15
each person in family aged 16 or over	12.50	13.15
each child under 16	6.25	6.60
<i>less than three meals a day</i>		
single claimant	8.30	8.75
each person in family aged 16 or over	8.30	8.75
each child under 16	4.15	4.35
<i>breakfast only – claimant and each member of family</i>		
	1.50	1.60
<i>Capital</i>		
upper limit	8,000.00	8,000.00
amount disregarded	3,000.00	3,000.00
child's limit	3,000.00	3,000.00
<i>Tariff income</i>		
<i>£1 for every complete £250 or part thereof between amount of capital disregarded and capital upper limit</i>		
<i>Earnings disregards</i>		
where disability premium awarded	15.00	15.00
various specified employments	15.00	15.00
lone parent – in receipt of IS	15.00	15.00
lone parent – not in receipt of IS (from October 1990)	15.00	25.00
where the claimant has a partner	10.00	10.00
single claimant	5.00	5.00
<i>Other income disregards</i>		
<i>war disablement pension and war widows pension</i>		
	5.00	10.00
voluntary and charitable payments	5.00	5.00
student's covenanted income	5.00	5.00
<i>Expenses for subtenants</i>		
furnished or unfurnished	4.00	4.00
where heating is included, additional	7.00	7.35
<i>Income Support</i>		
<i>Personal allowances</i>		
<i>single</i>		
under 18 – usual rate	20.80	21.90
under 18 – higher rate payable in specific circumstances	27.40	28.80
18 to 24	27.40	28.80
25 or over	34.90	36.70
<i>lone parent</i>		
under 18 – usual rate	20.80	21.90
under 18 – higher rate payable in specific circumstances	27.40	28.80
18 or over	34.90	36.70

<i>Weekly rates unless otherwise shown</i>	<i>Old rates 1989</i>	<i>New rates 1990</i>
couple		
both under 18	41.60	43.80
one or both over 18	54.80	57.60
dependent children		
under 11	11.75	12.35
11 to 15	17.35	18.25
16 to 17	20.80	21.90
18	27.40	28.80
Premiums		
family	6.50	7.35
lone parent	3.90	4.10
pensioner		
single	11.20	11.80
couple	17.05	17.95
pensioner (enhanced)		
single	13.70	14.40
couple	20.55	21.60
pensioner (higher)		
single	16.20	17.05
couple	23.00	24.25
disability		
single	13.70	15.40
couple	19.50	22.10
severe disability		
single	26.20	28.20
couple (one qualifies)	26.20	28.20
couple (both qualify)	52.40	56.40
disabled child	6.50	15.40
carers (from October 1990)		10.00
Maximum amounts for accommodation and meals in residential care homes		
old age	140.00	150.00
very dependent elderly	155.00	165.00
mental disorder (not handicap)	140.00	150.00
drug/alcohol dependence	140.00	150.00
mental handicap	165.00	175.00
physical disablement		
(a) (under pension age)	200.00	210.00
(b) (over pension age)	140.00	150.00
others (including elderly)	140.00	150.00
maximum Greater London increase	23.00	23.00
nursing homes		
mental disorder (not handicap)	195.00	200.00
drug/alcohol dependence	190.00	200.00
mental handicap	205.00	215.00
terminal illness	235.00	245.00
physical disablement		
(a) (under pension age)	235.00	245.00
(b) (over pension age)	190.00	200.00
others (including elderly)	190.00	200.00

<i>Weekly rates unless otherwise shown</i>	<i>Old rates 1989</i>	<i>New rates 1990</i>
maximum Greater London increase	23.00	23.00
Amounts for meals where these cannot be purchased within the accommodation (daily rate)		
breakfast	1.10	1.10
midday meal	1.55	1.55
evening meal	1.55	1.55
Allowances for personal expenses for claimants in private and voluntary residential care and nursing homes personal allowance	10.05	10.55
dependent children		
(a) under 11	4.10	4.30
(b) 11 to 15	6.05	6.35
(c) 16 to 17	7.00	7.35
(d) age 18	10.05	10.55
hospital	8.70	11.75
local authority (Pt III) accommodation	8.70	9.40
the Polish Home Ilford Park		
maximum amount for accommodation and meals	140.00	150.00
personal expenses for claimant	13.25	13.95
personal expenses for partner	13.25	13.95
personal expenses for dependent children		
(a) under 11	4.10	4.30
(b) 11 to 15	6.05	6.35
(c) 16 to 17	7.00	7.35
(d) age 18	11.95	12.55
Housing costs		
deduction for non-dependants		
aged 18 or over and in remunerative work	9.15	10.85
others, aged 18 or over, or on Income Support and over 25	3.85	4.55
low earnings threshold	52.10	56.05
Deduction for direct payments		
fuel debt 5 per cent rate	1.75	1.85
fuel debt 10 per cent rate	3.50	3.70
arrears of housing costs	1.75	1.85
arrears of water rates	1.75	1.85
Deductions for arrears of Community Charge		
single debtor	1.75	1.85
couple debtors both with IS	2.75	2.90
Reduction in benefit for strikers	18.50	19.50
Capital		
upper limit	6,000.00	6,000.00
amount disregarded	3,000.00	3,000.00
child's limit	3,000.00	3,000.00
Tariff income		
£1 for every complete £250 or part thereof between amount of capital disregarded and capital upper limit		

<i>Weekly rates unless otherwise shown</i>	<i>Old rates 1989</i>	<i>New rates 1990</i>
Disregards		
standard earnings	5.00	5.00
higher earnings	15.00	15.00
war disablement pension and war widows pension	5.00	10.00
voluntary and charitable payments	5.00	5.00
student's covenanted income	5.00	5.00
Expenses for subtenants		
furnished or unfurnished	4.00	4.00
where heating is included, additional	7.00	7.35
<i>Industrial death benefit</i>		
Widow's pension		
higher rate	43.60	46.90
lower rate	13.08	14.07
<i>Industrial disablement pension</i>		
18 and over, or under 18 with dependants		
100 per cent	71.20	76.60
90 per cent	64.08	68.94
80 per cent	56.96	61.28
70 per cent	49.84	53.62
60 per cent	42.72	45.96
50 per cent	35.60	38.30
40 per cent	28.48	30.64
30 per cent	21.36	22.98
20 per cent	14.24	15.32
Under 18		
100 per cent	43.60	46.90
90 per cent	39.24	42.21
80 per cent	34.88	37.52
70 per cent	30.52	32.83
60 per cent	26.16	28.14
50 per cent	21.80	23.45
40 per cent	17.44	18.76
30 per cent	13.08	14.07
20 per cent	8.72	9.38
Maximum life gratuity (lump sum)	4,730.00	5,090.00
Unemployability Supplement	43.60	46.90
plus where appropriate an increase for early incapacity		
higher rate	9.20	10.00
middle rate	5.80	6.20
lower rate	2.90	3.10
Maximum special hardship allowance/ reduced earnings allowance	28.48	30.64
Maximum retirement allowance	7.12	7.66
Constant attendance allowance		
exceptional rate	57.00	61.40
intermediate rate	42.75	46.05
normal maximum rate	28.50	30.70
part-time rate	14.25	15.35
Exceptionally severe disablement allowance	28.50	30.70
<i>Invalid care allowance</i>	26.20	28.20

<i>Weekly rates unless otherwise shown</i>	<i>Old rates 1989</i>	<i>New rates 1990</i>
<i>Invalidity benefit</i>		
Invalidity pension	43.60	46.90
Invalidity allowance		
higher rate	9.20	10.00
middle rate	5.80	6.20
lower rate	2.90	3.10
<i>Maternity allowance</i>	33.20	35.70
<i>Maternity payment</i>	85.00	100.00
<i>Mobility allowance</i>	24.40	26.25
<i>One-parent benefit</i>	5.20	5.60
<i>Pneumoconiosis, byssinosis, workmen's compensation (supplementation) and other schemes</i>		
Total disablement allowance and major incapacity allowance (maximum)	71.20	76.60
Partial disablement allowance	26.20	28.20
Unemployment supplement plus where appropriate increases for early incapacity	43.60	46.90
higher rate	9.20	10.00
middle rate	5.80	6.20
lower rate	2.90	3.10
Constant attendance allowance		
exceptional rate	57.00	61.40
intermediate rate	42.75	46.05
normal maximum rate	28.50	30.70
part-time rate	14.25	15.35
Exceptionally severe disablement allowance	28.50	30.70
Lesser incapacity allowance		
maximum rate of allowance	26.20	28.20
based on loss of earnings over	34.90	37.55
<i>Retirement pension</i>		
Category A or B	43.60	46.90
Category B (lower) – husband's insurance	26.20	28.20
Category C or D – non-contributory	26.20	28.20
Category C (lower) – non-contributory	15.65	16.85
Additional pension		(increased by 7.6%)
Increments to basic and additional pension, contracted out deductions (from pre April 1988 earnings) and graduated retirement benefit		(increased by 7.6%)
Contracted out deductions and increments to contracted out deductions (from post April 1988 earnings ¹)		(increased by 4.6%)
Graduated retirement benefit (unit)(pence)	5.71	6.14

<i>Weekly rates unless otherwise shown</i>	<i>Old rates 1989</i>	<i>New rates 1990</i>
Addition at age 80	0.25	0.25
<i>Severe disablement allowance</i>	26.20	28.20
<i>Sickness benefit</i>		
Over pension age	41.80	45.00
Under pension age	33.20	35.70
<i>Social fund</i>		
Capital limit – aged 60 and over	500.00	1,000.00
<i>Statutory maternity pay</i>		
Earnings threshold	43.00	46.00
Lower rate	36.25	39.25
<i>Statutory sick pay</i>		
Earnings threshold	43.00	46.00
Standard rate threshold	84.00	125.00
Lower rate	36.25	39.25
Standard rate	52.10	52.50
<i>Unemployment benefit</i>		
Over pension age	43.60	46.90
Under pension age	34.70	37.35
Occupational pension abatement	35.00	35.00
<i>War pensions</i>		
Disablement pension (100 per cent rates)		
private or equivalent officer (£ per annum)	71.20	76.60
	3,712.00	3,994.00
<i>Age allowances</i>		
40 per cent – 50 per cent	5.00	5.40
over 50 per cent but not over 70 per cent	7.75	8.35
over 70 per cent but not over 90 per cent	11.10	11.95
over 90 per cent	15.50	16.70
<i>Disablement gratuity</i>		
(base figures for calculation purposes only)		
specified minor injury	4,730.00	5,090.00
unspecified minor injury	2,601.50	2,799.50
<i>Unemployability allowance</i>		
personal	46.30	49.80
adult dependency increase	26.20	28.20
increase for each child	8.95	9.65
<i>Invalidity allowance</i>		
higher rate	9.20	10.00
middle rate	5.80	6.20
lower rate	2.90	3.10
<i>Constant attendance allowance</i>		
exceptional rate	57.00	61.40
intermediate rate	42.75	46.05
normal maximum rate	28.50	30.70
part-time rate	14.25	15.35
<i>Comforts allowance</i>		
higher rate	12.30	13.20
lower rate	6.15	6.60
<i>Mobility supplement</i>	27.10	29.15

<i>Weekly rates unless otherwise shown</i>	<i>Old rates 1989</i>	<i>New rates 1990</i>
Allowance for lowered standard of occupation (maximum)	28.48	30.64
Exceptionally severe disablement allowance	28.50	30.70
Severe disablement occupational allowance	14.25	15.35
<i>Clothing allowance (£ per annum)</i>		
higher rate	97.00	104.00
lower rate	61.00	66.00
<i>Education allowance (£ per annum)</i>		
(maximum)	120.00	120.00
<i>War widow's pension (private)</i>		
widow	56.65	60.95
childless widow under 40	13.08	14.07
age allowance		
(a) age 65 to 69	6.10	7.00
(b) age 70 to 79	12.20	13.50
(c) age 80 and over	15.30	20.00
children's allowance	12.60	13.40
<i>Orphan's pension</i>	13.80	14.70
<i>Unmarried dependant living as spouse</i>		
(maximum)	54.60	58.90
<i>Rent allowance (maximum)</i>	21.55	23.20
<i>Adult orphan's pension (maximum)</i>	43.60	46.90
<i>Widower's pension (maximum)</i>	56.65	60.95
<i>Widow's benefit</i>		
<i>Widow's payment (lump sum)</i>	1,000.00	1,000.00
<i>Widowed mother's allowance</i>	43.60	46.90
<i>Widow's pension</i>		
standard rate	43.60	46.90
age related		
age 54 (49)	40.55	43.62
53 (48)	37.50	40.33
52 (47)	34.44	37.05
51 (46)	31.39	33.77
50 (45)	28.34	30.49
49 (44)	25.29	27.20
48 (43)	22.24	23.92
47 (42)	19.18	20.64
46 (41)	16.13	17.35
45 (40)	13.08	14.07

¹Contracted out deductions and increments (post April 1988). Scheme is responsible for 3 per cent. Balance of 4.6 per cent paid by State.

Note: For deaths occurring before 11 April 1988 refer to age-points shown in brackets.

Social Security Benefits Up-rating Extract from *Hansard*.



Below
In the foreground Gyles Brandreth of TV AM fame with (from right to left) Jennie Whiting, Appeals Director, Philip Fusco and Roger Jackaman—the crew of the Fiat Uno Turbo which was responsible for bringing back the Beaujolais and for raising over £8,000.00 for ASBAH.

Photographs: Alan Webb



Right:
Mike Ayton and Tony Cole, two of the five-strong team of surveyors from Hillier Parker, who raised £325 for ASBAH by successfully completing the three peaks course in the Peak District recently, present Jennie Whiting, Appeals Director with their cheque.



APPEALS REPORT

11 year- old Mark Einecher (left) was over the moon when he found out that he had been invited to meet his favourite team by West Ham Football Club. All kitted out in West Ham gear he was allowed onto the pitch to shoot a goal in front of 20,000 spectators. The most exciting part of the day was meeting the players, amongst them skipper Julian Dicks. Another of the day's highlights was coming face to face with East Enders Wicksy, alias actor Nick Berry, who was in goal.

Mark came home with a signed football, photos of West Ham players and an album, mementoes of what will always be a day to remember. The trip was organised through ASBAH and West Ham permitted an envelope collection to be carried out for the charity by volunteers which raised £1,100.

Photograph: Croydon Advertiser

Below:
Officers' wives in Winchester raise money for ASBAH. Mrs Nicki Gaskell presents a cheque for £250 to Mrs Gillmore, ASBAH's Shops Coordinator for Solent, after their sponsored challenge over the assault course.



TAKING TO THE AIR by Ray Gainer

I was born with spina bifida on 15 May 1960 at Leigh Maternity Home in Greater Manchester. I am lucky—I have feeling and movement in my legs—but to correct my right club foot and leg I spent most of my first ten years of life in various hospitals undergoing countless operations. Over the next eleven years I battled with ulcers on my legs and feet, a complication of the kidney surgery I had had in 1970 when my right kidney was removed.

I began my schooling—first at home because I was not allowed to go to a normal school because of my wheelchair—and then at Mere Oakes School in Wigan. I continued my education in hospital when my ulcers became infected.

I had very little support from my Careers Officer at school; she wanted me to pack boxes in a factory. I wanted more out of life...

I managed to get over the loss of my mother who died of cancer, and tried to get on with building my life. I finished my final three years of schooling and went to live in Liverpool with my sister. I explained to my father that it was time I started to think what I wanted to do as a career and there was nothing in Leigh for me. I had very little support from my Careers Officer at school; she wanted me to pack boxes in a factory. I wanted more out of life, so I did not take her advice.

I gained and lost two jobs through injuries—the first as a despatch motorbike rider, the other as a security patrolman/driver. My sister supported me financially as my disability allowance was



insufficient and I was not entitled to unemployment benefit.

I have been mad about planes since childhood, and I began to think that maybe I could gain a career from flying. After a trial flying lesson when I was actually given the controls to fly the plane, I knew that this was the career I wanted. I realized that the Civil Aviation Authority would be concerned about my disability. I needed to prove that my legs could manage the rudder, so I was put in a spin at 10,000 feet and told to recover using the rudder. Upon passing this assessment I was granted a medical certificate and began to gain my private pilot's licence standard in 1981.

I could not afford all the lessons myself so my girlfriend and sister helped me to pay for them. After only nine hours flying my foot broke down, but I studied in hospital and my girlfriend travelled to

Manchester every day to visit me. She gave me the determination to carry on when I just wanted to pack it in.

My instructor and the air traffic controller congratulated me...it had been a hard slog for me to get this far.

It would be four years before I could resume flying. After only two hours with my instructor he told me that I was going solo for the first time. I cannot really explain what went through my head while I was sitting in the aircraft on the runway alone. I opened the throttle to power the engine and I talked myself through all the routine actions I had to do. I lifted off and I could see my instructor sitting on the grass at the

side of the runway watching me. The circuit was easy, but when descending on the final approach I just prayed that everything I had been taught had sunk in. I was about ten feet from touchdown. I pulled the nose of the aircraft up and the main wheel touched down without a single bump. I had just made my first solo command and my best landing! My instructor and the air traffic controller congratulated me because they realised it had been a hard slog for me to get this far.

After passing my written exams and a supervised cross-country flight, I had only to do my solo cross-country qualifier. The visibility was bad during the flight and I veered away from my destination of Halfpenny Green. I radioed Birmingham Airport to give me a radar identification and position and to give me a course to steer for Halfpenny Green.

I cannot tell you the feeling of relief when I knew I had succeeded. I had qualified for my Private Pilot's Licence. My instructor knew I had received assistance during the qualifying flight, but we agreed it was better to do this than to carry on and get into more trouble.

**I cannot tell you the feeling
of relief when I knew I
had succeeded**

I received my flying licence ten days later and was awarded Student Pilot of the Year by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association in 1987 for overcoming my disability and also for a charity event I organized. In October 1987 my friends at the flying school and I completed 213 non-stop take-offs

and landings in 16 hours 5 mins, creating a new world record and raising £2,000 for people with cerebral palsy.

I have now been awarded a Douglas Bader Scholarship to continue my flying-instructor training and expand on my 900 hours flying experience.

I have been free from hospital since September 1982 and look forward to qualifying as a commercial pilot. I have been offered a pilot job at Liverpool Airport upon attaining my licence. The training has cost me about £12,000 and I have committed all my available finances to date. I now need to raise about £2,000 urgently to cover the cost of text books and equipment. I am hoping that someone, somewhere may be able to help me raise some of the money so that I can realise my ultimate ambition.

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

**Congratulations to
Competition winner**

Mrs P Grayson of Orpington, Kent was judged to have furnished us with the most humorous incident concerning the arrival of far too many loaned wheelchairs. She wins the DFDS mini two-day cruise.

Change of address

The address for the British Epilepsy Association in the last edition of LINK was incorrect. The current address is: Anstey House, 40 Hanover Square, Leeds, LS3 1BE

Christmas greetings

As this is the last issue of LINK in 1989, everyone at ASBAH takes this opportunity of wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

In 1990 *Link* will still be published every alternate month, starting in February, but it is only going to bear the name of the month in which it is published. During the month *Link* is not published you will as usual receive *Bulletin*. This change will in no way affect your subscription or any mailing date.

Survey seeks support

'rica'—Research Institute for Consumer Affairs is eager to hear from anyone willing to partake in a survey. In association with Banstead Place Mobility Centre they have undertaken a major project which will evaluate powered wheelchairs, buggies and scooters.

If you would be willing to fill out a questionnaire please contact:

Indu Varma
rica
2 Marylebone Road
London, NW1 4DX.

THE LIGHTWEIGHT WHEELCHAIR

'Not all of us can afford the luxury of buying the wheelchair of our choice. However if you are in a position to purchase a wheelchair, a lightweight wheelchair is worth considering' says John Naude, one of ASBAH's Disabled Living Advisors.

Once designed exclusively for the disabled sports person, the advantages of lightweight wheelchairs make compelling reasons for much wider general use.

The lightweight chair has numerous useful features—the light, sturdy and fully adjustable frame provides improved manoeuvrability, comfort and appearance,

the weight of the chair is concentrated on the back wheel. This makes the chair easier to tip backwards to mount kerbs and move up slopes or along soft ground. The lightweight chair can be easily pushed, and is less tiring for the users who can propel themselves further with each push than they could in a DoH wheelchair because the back wheels are

especially the ease with which it tips backwards. Adjusting to the chair takes time and, most importantly, practice of newly-acquired skills such as the back wheel balance, falling out of the chair safely and, especially, getting back in again. Many young people have acquired these skills quickly at ASBAH's workshops.

Until the wheelchair user's confidence and skills improve, the wheelchair's frame can be adjusted to provide more support. The back wheel can be moved further back to provide a larger wheel base, which makes tipping more difficult, and the chair can be lowered to make it more stable. To the same end, the chair can be fitted with accessories (at extra cost), such as arm rests, pushing handles, seat belt and anti-tip castors which can be removed from the chair when no longer required.

There are a number of important factors which are worth considering when purchasing a lightweight wheelchair. There are two styles of frame, folding and rigid. Folding chairs aid storage, but sportspeople require a rigid chair.

These wheelchairs are not cheap—around £300 buys the most basic model, ranging up to about £1,500 depending largely on what accessories are purchased. The most expensive wheelchair is often not the most suitable, so it is

important to ascertain one's needs first, and do not allow persuasive sales people to sell accessories which are not needed.

Wheelchair retailers do not usually allow the chair to be taken home and tested, but they are often willing to send a sales person and wheelchair out to the homes of potential purchasers. It is important to get a good impression of how comfortable and efficient a wheelchair is, as the retailers are unlikely to allow an exchange or a refund of precious money already spent on a wheelchair purchase.

The wheelchair to be tested should be the correct size—don't buy a wheelchair on the strength of a promise that the next largest size would be more comfortable. Sitting in the wheelchair for five minutes in the living room is not an adequate test of a wheelchair's performance. It is far better to sit in the chair for at least an hour if possible, and take the chair into all the rooms of the house and outside, perhaps on a kerb. Try putting the chair into the car. The DLA staff at ASBAH have much more detailed information about all types of wheelchairs and are happy to discuss their features.

Raising the money to purchase a wheelchair may require asking for donations from the local community. This has been done many



Chevron 500

enabling the wheelchair user to make maximum use of their abilities.

The lightweight frame, together with the large 24" wheels, greatly improves the chair's manoeuvrability because the wheelbase of the chair is shortened and

reachable. Their light weight, foldability and quick release wheels make the chairs relatively easy to transport in a car.

At first it may seem difficult adapting to the manoeuvrability of the lightweight wheelchair,



Chevron 600

times in the past with great success. It is important firstly to know exactly which chair is to be purchased and to have a photograph of the chair accompanied by a list of its special features. Local businesses, both large and small, are more likely to make a donation if they understand that the life of the wheelchair user will improve significantly with the purchase of the chair, for example, mobility and thus both independence and confidence are likely to improve with the use of the new wheelchair. It might be necessary to explain how the chair allows the user to mount kerbs, and the significance of this and other manoeuvres.

Sponsored fund raising events can also be quite effective. Fellow club members or local groups, such as Rotary, Lions or Round Table, might be able to help by participating in sponsored events such as walking or other sports, or fetes. The local media are always looking for articles of local interest—this would give wider support for an event or appeal. There are many alternatives and ASBAH may be able to help with ideas.

A final consideration is the purchase of a cheaper second-hand wheelchair, allowing the wheelchair user to determine, with use over time, more precisely what design attachments their wheelchair requires.

PILOT'S LICENCE—UNIQUE SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME

The Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund's International Air Tattoo Flying Scholarships for Disabled People in memory of Sir Douglas Bader are awarded every year to nine disabled people to learn to fly.

Helen Gwilliam, from Shropshire was born with spina bifida and was awarded a scholarship which has taken her to Panama City in Florida for flight training. Helen wanted to learn to fly in order to continue the ethos of the scholarship in raising awareness of the capabilities

of disabled people. She is keen to achieve and acquire new skills, especially if they are somewhat out of the ordinary.

This unique RAF Benevolent Fund scheme is once again on the hunt for disabled would be pilots between 17 and 40 years of age and resident in the UK. Application forms can be obtained from: Wing Commander John Patterson, International Air Tattoo, Building 11081 RAF Fairford, Gloucestershire GL7 4DL. The closing date for applications is 31st January 1990.



Helen Gwilliam after receiving her certificate of award from HM King Hussein of Jordan.



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Adverts for the next issue of *Link* (February) should be
in by 10th. January Send to: The Editor, LINK, ASBAH,
22 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1.

HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

RED CROSS HOUSE, INVERNESS offers respite/care activity holidays throughout the year to disabled people over sixteen years of age. A 24 hour care facility is provided by skilled care staff and voluntary helpers. Accommodation is single hotel standard bedrooms. For details of what we offer, please contact Mike Webster on Inverness (0463) 234939.

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.

WESTWARD HO! North Devon. Holiday Chalet. Sleeps six. Excellent club. Swimming pool and shop on site. Near sandy beach. S.A.E. to Mr. Oakley:- 12, Farleigh Road, Perton, Wolverhampton. Tel: 751484

SUNNY TENERIFE or scenic NORTH WALES ?
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RYE HARBOUR, Sussex. Fully equipped mobile home, adapted for wheelchair users. Sleeps 4. Continental bedding, comfortably furnished, colour T.V., bath and shower. Close to picturesque and ancient town of Rye. Half-hour drive to seaside resort of Hastings. Clubhouse and entertainment on site. Details: Mr P. Borthwick, 170, Hollington Old Lane, St. Leonards, East Sussex. Tel: 0424 51145.

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.

WINTER SUNSHINE BREAKS - SUNNY TENERIFE
Apartments and studios available for holiday rentals in wheelchair friendly complex. Heated pool with hoist, restaurant, health treatments. Video on request. For details of cheap Winter flights and accommodation contact:-
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