

Sue, Grabbit and Runne – That Well known Firm of Solicitors

OK, so it's not the most original title, but it does reflect the fears of lot of businesses and organisations about the effects of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) Part III.

From the first of October last year, the DDA extended requirements, affecting almost everybody who provides goods, services or employment, to treat people with impairments with equal consideration. If a disabled person claims that they have failed, then the provider could face paying hefty settlements both in compensation and legal costs.

Compensation? Luvvly Jubilee! (As Del Boy might say.) There'll be hordes of disabled folk queuing up to complain to the Disability Rights Commission that they have suffered unsurpassed discrimination and want compensation.

So, have the extensions of the powers of anti-discrimination legislation introduced in October created a gravy train?

Threats of legal penalties are effective in changing behaviour, but don't prompt an instant change in attitude. There is usually a reactionary backlash which actually reinforces negative feelings amongst those who imagine the law has created new ways for them to be penalised.

Laws would be unnecessary in a morally just society, however, no such Utopia exists, nor is it ever likely to. But this does not mean we should not aim to live according to sound principles rather than merely to avoid getting caught offending.

What does it all mean for us? If we are abused, then we have a right to call upon the law to penalise our abusers. When laws are effective, offences against them are rare.

There is no doubt that the DDA and its forthcoming supplementary legislation gives people with impairments the power to challenge many disabling abuses. You can see the full extent of the legislation by visiting the www.disability.gov.uk and www.drc.org.uk websites. DDA provisions cover such a wide and diverse field, embracing employment, access to buildings, provision of goods and services, literature and websites, that there are probably very few people and organisations which comply entirely with the law

So, shall we all go and sue, grab it and run, or should we think about our responsibilities before spotting opportunities to get free money by tub-thumping about 'our rights'? This legislation is for our benefit. Let's not destroy its credibility by using it unwisely.

Winners of the Joan Cope competition in the Autumn Edition

Mrs S Allen, Polegate, East Sussex

Mrs H Rose, Braintree, Essex

Ms D Matthews, Thornton Heath, Surrey

Ms M Ang, Leeds

Ms Cresswell, Houghton Le Spring, Tyne & Wear

Encouraging the Arts

Action Space Mobile

Action Space Mobile is a community arts organisation and registered charity that works with professional artists with special skills in various media such as drama arts and crafts, dance, music and information technology.

Their work aims to enhance the lives of individuals and groups through the participation and encouragement of the arts.

Mary Turner developed Action Space Mobile from Action Space, which she co-founded in the late 60's in London. Working in the streets, parks, play schemes and inner city council estates, it challenged the drab environments of the 60's rebuilding programmes, it challenged education with its philosophy of free schools and it challenged the arts establishment to recognise artists, musicians, actors and dancers that wanted to work in the non-traditional environment and with a wider public.

After becoming Action Space Mobile, it moved to Yorkshire in 1982 and from its base in Sheffield, toured throughout the UK and Europe.

It now has three integrated arts companies based in Barnsley, Sheffield and York, where artists work along side the adult participants and produce performances and exhibitions that show their abilities to the wider public in theatres, galleries, colleges and schools. Each of the three groups has a different focus due to the interests of the group members and their artists.

Once a year a residential meeting of all the groups allows an exchange of skills between all the artists and participants, opening a wider perspective on their place in the world of disability arts.

Action Space Mobile works across five main themes:-

- Working with people with special needs
- Lifelong Learning
- Community development and regeneration
- Artist training and development
- National and International programmes of advocacy

Their portfolio of projects includes:

- Drama, performance and combined arts groups for people with special needs
- Holiday arts programmes for children with severe and multiple disabilities
- A dance group for people with special needs
- Programmes of work for asylum seekers and refugees
- Contracts to develop local arts strategies for community partnerships
- Projects for disadvantaged communities in Romania

The people that Action Space Mobile works with have made remarkable progress in developing their talents.

Support is received from many sources and the charity is seen as a service provider by the local authorities. The charity is also a recognised affiliate member of Mencap and receives a small grant from them. Other funding sources include Awards for All, Barnsley MBC, BBC Children in Need,

Community Fund, Creative Partnerships, Learning Skills Council, Lloyds TSB, Muxica Charitable Trust, New Opportunities Fund, Regional Arts Lottery Programme, Relief Fund for Romania, Sheffield Community Arts, The Talbot Trust and Yorkshire Arts.

For more information about Action Space Mobile or any of the projects please call 01226 391 112 or visit www.actionspacemobile.org

A Dream Come True

A Magical Trip to Disneyworld

Imagine the excitement of boarding a Boeing 747, anticipating a meeting with the man himself-Mickey Mouse! and the fun to be had with all of your favourite Disney characters. This is Dreamflight.

Dreamflight is a registered UK charity whose sole purpose is to take seriously ill children on their "holiday of a lifetime" to the theme parks of central Florida.

Whilst many charities devote their energies to funding long-term research projects or the purchase of expensive medical equipment, Dreamflight thinks it is equally important to bring a little fun and joy into the lives of children who perhaps can't wait long enough for a medical breakthrough they need or whose illnesses have brought pain, distress and disruption to their lives.

How it all Started

The original concept was devised way back in 1986 by Derek Pereira and Patricia Pearce, together with a small group of British Airways staff. In November 1987 a Boeing 747 full of 288 sick children and their adult helpers flew off to Disneyworld, Florida for five magical days.

It was intended to be a "one-off" trip but, so successful was the inaugural flight that it has now become an annual event.

How is it Organised?

While many of the organisers are currently employed by British Airways and the airline gives considerable support, the charity is purely a staff initiative and is therefore independent both financially and organisationally from the airline. All of the fund raising projects are undertaken by individuals on a self financing basis and the organisation is undertaken by volunteers.

The Children

Unfortunately Dreamflight can't offer every deserving child in the country the chance of a holiday in Florida, so they look for children whose illnesses have made their lives so difficult and so unpleasant that they simply deserve a major treat.

The basic criteria require that the children are usually between the ages of 8 and 14 and are currently, or have been seriously ill. Advice is taken from the medical profession and suggestions from paediatricians from all areas of the UK are taken into consideration to ensure that the particular child will benefit from the experience. Naturally, more nominations are received than can be coped with and the medical director scrutinises each individual case and makes the final decision and although each year is over-subscribed with deserving children, many of those unlucky this year will be chosen next year.

A number of factors are considered when making the selection, including fitness for the long flight and busy holiday as well as the level of medical attention required. Although most of the children will need supervised medication or treatment it is never forgotten that this is a holiday, so the attention they require must not be so intrusive as to risk spoiling the fun.

The Escorts

The children are divided into groups of 16 looked after by eight volunteer adults, headed up by a group leader. Included in each group are a doctor, senior nurse, physiotherapist and two nurses. Each escort is personally responsible for two children and are comprehensively briefed by the parents about medical requirements, drugs and treatment so they are fully aware of each individual's needs.

Additional US helpers are assigned to each group, so that, while in America, each child is accompanied on a one-to-one basis.

The Holiday

The atmosphere as the children gather in the hotel at Heathrow on the afternoon before the trip is electric. Many will never have had a holiday before and few will have been able to travel away from their doctors and families. Even the quite shy and reserved become mysteriously noisy and extrovert!

The days that follow are sheer magic. Not only are The Magic Kingdom and MGM Studios so much fun but the police and fire department of Orange County also get in on the act with helicopters, horses and jet skis for the kids to use.

It's often difficult for an outsider to believe the kids they see dashing around the attractions could have any problems in life. But find time to talk to them and you can't help but be impressed and humbled by their courage.

Fund Raising

The lifeblood of Dreamflight is their army of volunteer fund raisers, without whose help none of this would be possible. The costs are considerable, including the charter of a Boeing 747, accommodation in London prior to the trip and the cost of over 200 rooms at full board in Orlando. Although many of the operators offer generous discounts, Dreamflight are totally dependant on their year round fundraising projects.

At the beginning it seemed an impossible task but the generosity and commitment of so many dedicated people was underestimated. Whilst the largest proportion of funds id raised by individuals, corporate sponsorship has enabled the charity to be placed on a more stable financial footing, ensuring many more children will enjoy the magic of Dreamflight.

For further information and details of fund raising please call 01494 792 991

www.dreamflight.org

It Makes You Wonder! Thoughts from a generation

According to today's regulators and bureaucrats, those of us who were kids in the 50's, 60's, 70's and early 80's shouldn't have survived:

Our baby cots were covered in brightly coloured lead based paint which we promptly chewed and licked. There were no childproof lids on medicine bottles, or latches on doors and cabinets and it was totally acceptable to play with pans.

When we rode our bikes we wore no helmets or kneepads-just flip flops and fluorescent "clackers" on our wheels. We would ride in cars with no seatbelts or airbags and riding in the front passenger seat was a real treat.

We ate dripping sandwiches, bread and butter pudding and drank fizzy pop with loads of sugar in it, but we were never overweight because we were outside playing all the time. We shared one drink between four friends-drinking from the same can or bottle and no-one actually died from it!

We also drank water from the garden house and not from a fancy bottle and it tasted exactly the same.

We would spend hours building go-carts from scrap and then went top speed down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. After running into stinging nettles a few times, we learned to solve the problem.

We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we got home before dark. No-one was able to reach us all day (no mobile phones) and no-one minded. We walked to friends homes. We also, believe it or not, walked to school; we didn't rely on mummy or daddy to ferry us there in the 4x4.

There were no Play Stations, X-Boxes or video games. We didn't have 99 channels on TV, surround sound, DVDs, videos, personal computers or internet chatrooms.

WE HAD FRIENDS – WE WENT OUTSIDE AND FOUND THEM!

We played elastics and street rounders, and sometimes that ball really hurt. We fell out of trees, got cut and broke bones and teeth, but there were no lawsuits-they were accidents. We simply learned not to do the same thing again. We had fights, with fists only, and got black and blue, but we learned to get over it.

We rode bikes in packs of seven and wore our coats only by the hood. Our actions were our own and consequences were expected. The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke the law was unheard of. They actually agreed with the law -imagine that!

We made up games with sticks and tennis balls and ate live stuff and, although we were told it would happen, we did not have many eyes put out, nor did the live stuff live inside us forever.

We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility and we learned how to deal with it!

This generation has produced some of the best risk-takers, entrepreneurs, problem-solvers and inventors ever. The past 50 years have been an explosion of innovation and new ideas. I wonder what the next 50 years will bring. ANON.

Promoting Good Practice- The FA Disability Conference

The success of the England Learning Disability team in returning from the Global Games in Sweden as champions last summer was one of the achievements marked at an inaugural FA Disability Conference in December.

England Team Manager Lyndon Lynch was amongst the speakers at the "Ability to Succeed" Conference held at the City of Manchester Stadium, which was the first football-specific conference of its kind addressing football for disabled people. Lyndon talked about his work in preparing the Learning Disability squad for a major championship and the challenges presented.

"I was so delighted with the team performance in winning the Global Games, and proud of everything the players achieved. Everyone involved gave their all to secure that win and confirm England as the number one team in LD football", said Lyndon.

The conference, hosted by BBC television presenter Ray Stubbs, attracted over 300 delegates and was opened by FA Council Member Sue Hough, who is also Chair of the Disability Advisory Group.

The FA's National Development Manager for Disability Football, Jeff Davis, provided an inspirational tone for the day. In a passionate speech he described his commitment to developing opportunities, resources and funding so that everyone, regardless of their abilities, could enjoy participation and progress.

"This may be the first conference we've staged," said Jeff. "But we've already come a long way and, although we've got a long way to go, I believe we are the world's leading governing body in this area. I am proud to work for The FA and proud of our record so far. Our Strategy placed football for disabled people as a key element to football development and stated clear aims and objectives for the next three years."

There were also examples of good practice such as the work done by Everton Football Club who are now officially represented by as many as six disability football teams, and have England Amputees captain Steve Johnson working alongside their Disabled Football Development Officer Mark Elliott in delivering opportunities to disabled people across Merseyside.

Another speaker at the conference was The FA's Ethics and Sports Equity Manager Lucy Faulkner who emphasised the commitment made to ensure football is open to all sections of society. "The FA has developed a range of initiatives that impact on the way disabled people can access the game," she said.

Sir Trevor Brooking, The FA's Director of Football Development, added to the conference by saying the search was on for more funding and better coaches at all levels of football.

Hoping to increase government funding, Sir Trevor said: "The school sport agenda is a big one for us and so is obesity. Football, as the national game, can play a big part in helping meet those government targets but we need a bigger slice of the funding cake to do it. I would urge everyone to play a part in lobbying locally - MPs, Councillors and the like - because we need to make sure our voice is heard."

The England and Manchester City goalkeeper David James made a surprise appearance at the conference. He took time to pledge his support for The FA's drive to make football as accessible as possible

"I don't know as much as you about disability football," he said, "But I do believe that people should have the opportunity to play. If I can help that in a small way, then I'm delighted to do so."

The FA ensured the conference included signers and a text screen as well as provisions for wheelchair users and others with special needs. Delegates included many with disabilities and The FA would be keen to hear feedback from anyone at the event to ensure all special needs were met.

The Football Association Ltd., 25 Soho Square, London, W1D 4FA
tel.0207 745 4545
www.TheFA.com

Have You Read That?

National Library for the Blind

Imagine not being able to get hold of the book all your friends are saying you must read. Newspapers, magazines and TV shows are telling you it's one of the best books they've ever read, but you can't read it, let alone express your views or vote for it. Thankfully that is not the case with Richard & Judy's Book Club!

Channel 4's Richard & Judy programme has joined forces with the National Library for the Blind (NLB) and top publishers to ensure that blind readers are able to join in with their Book Club.

The second annual Book Club, which will run on the programme every Wednesday for ten weeks, will feature ten books including a mix of thrillers, literary fiction and biographies.

Featured publishers have agreed to donate £1500 each to pay for the National Library for the Blind to transcribe the chosen books into Braille. This means that visually impaired people will be able to fully participate in the programme and take part in reading groups to discuss the chosen titles.

Helen Brazier, Chief Executive of the National Library for the Blind said: "We're very excited about the work we are doing with the Richard & Judy programme, and also the support we are getting from publishers. Not only are they funding Braille copies of their books, they are also supplying us with digital text files too. This makes the Braille production process so much quicker and cheaper."

She added: "We can only continue our work at NLB thanks to generous donations and the support of projects such as the Richard & Judy Book Club. We hope that publishers will continue to support our work bringing the magic of reading to blind people throughout the UK."

STOP PRESS

Visually impaired children across the UK will be able to enjoy twelve new Braille books, thanks to a £12,000 donation to the National Library for the Blind (NLB) from Britannia Building Society's Charitable Foundation.

The range of titles available for blind and partially sighted children to read in the UK is very small, and many are produced by the charity sector. These are produced in accessible formats such as Braille, large print and audio, so that blind children have the chance to join in with their sighted friends in reading the latest books.

Neville Richardson, Britannia group chief executive commented: "We are delighted to be able to help the National Library for the Blind continue its great work producing books for visually impaired children. It is great to see our members' money making a real difference to the lives of deserving children through the enjoyment of reading."

NLB Registered Charity Number: 213212
Website: <http://www.nlb-online.org>

Are We Losing Touch with Nature?

Woodland Trust's Tree For All campaign

Celebrity gardener Charlie Dimmock used her green fingers to tie a green ribbon round an old oak tree to celebrate the start of the Woodland Trust's Tree For All campaign that will encourage a million children to plant trees across the UK.

Charlie believes that Tree For All provides a fantastic opportunity to inspire children with a love of nature "Children I meet everywhere I go are really enthusiastic when I talk to them about nature and wildlife. Tree For All is a wonderful way to get children outdoors and involved in growing trees and caring for their generation's environment."

The Woodland Trust's Tree For All campaign is the country's largest ever children's tree planting campaign. Tree For All aims to reconnect a generation that is becoming increasingly disengaged from the natural world through the simple act of planting a tree. The campaign will see twelve million trees planted across the country, which is a tree for every child under the age of 16, over the next five years.

Andy Beer of the Woodland Trust adds: "Tree For All is all about encouraging children to get involved in tree planting in their local communities. We want children to take a break from spending the weekend watching TV and playing video games and to get outside, get muddy and learn about how they can help make a difference for the future of our natural world. We want to inspire children with a love of nature to ensure that the next generation grows up ready to take action."

Charlie says: "We need a new generation to get passionate and involved about the planet as it is such a delicate environmental balance. Tree For All is a way of doing this. It deserves our support."

The campaign aims to:-

- **Plant 12 million trees** throughout the UK between September 2004 and 2009- that's one tree planted for every child under 16. If all the trees were planted together they would fill 18,000 football pitches.
- **Involve one million children** directly in planting trees through schools, community groups, public events or in their own gardens.
- **Involve people of all ages**-with the chance to join local events, plant a native tree at home or even plant a tree on-line.

Woodland is a precious and irreplaceable asset. It is one of the UK's richest wildlife habitats and provides immense social and economical benefits. In the last 100 years nearly half of our woodland, including priceless trees more than 400 years old, have been lost to make way for conifer plantations, agriculture, houses, motorways and airports.

Tree For All is happening nationwide, with planting events and community activities taking place across the UK. If you can't get to an organised tree planting event you can still make a difference by planting a tree at home, at school, in your local community or you can even plant an e-tree online.

For more information about how to get involved, visit the website at www.treeforall.org.uk or call 0845 108 1428.

The Woodland Trust: The Woodland Trust is the UK's leading woodland conservation charity. It has 250,000 members and supporters. The Trust has four key aims:-

- No further loss of ancient woodland.
- Restoring and improving the biodiversity of woods.
- Increasing new native woodland.
- Increasing people's understanding and enjoyment of woodland.

Established in 1972, the Woodland Trust now has over 1,000 sites in its care covering approximately 20,000 hectares (50,000 acres). Access to its sites is free. Further information can be found at www.woodland-trust.org.uk

Stress!

A Major Health Hazard

Everyone knows that stress isn't good for you – that it can get on top of us and effect our wellbeing. What most people don't realise is that stress can effect much more than just our mood or mental state. Stress has been shown to have a detrimental effect on many parts of our body and indeed people's health in general.

Most people are so used to stress and tension in their lives that they do little or nothing about it until it begins to have major negative effects on them. Everyone suffers from stress - but it is important to sit up and take notice when stress begins to effect you.

Stress has a negative effect on your mental process. It can make you moody, anxious and unable to calmly cope with life. However, stress also effects your body, causing many afflictions such as high heart rate and blood pressure problems. These are two key indicators of stress being a problem so, if you suffer from them, then it is time to reduce the stress in your life. By acting early you can dramatically reduce your stress level and your health should return to normal.

If you're wondering about whether or not you should reduce stress in your daily life, the answer is probably yes. Even if you don't feel overly stressed out all that often, stress reduction will still improve your life. Since being too stressed can have major long term effects on your health, this is a case where you're probably better safe than sorry.

Reducing Stress

This really is not difficult. A little time spent planning how to change your lifestyle can make a huge difference.

The first thing to do is to sit down and make a list of all the things that are causing you to be stressed out. Don't be afraid to write down anything that is genuinely stressful or even something that you think should be stressful, then go through the list again and see which things you can eliminate from your life. Obviously, you won't be able to eliminate everything on your list. Work, for example, is a necessity, but there will be lots of things that you can genuinely address. Doing this, even with only a few things on your list can make all the difference to your stress level.

Relaxation

Relaxation is something that you should add to your schedule on a regular basis. There are few things that reduce your overall stress level like a good time spent relaxing. Set aside a period every day to relax – and make sure it's actually scheduled. After all, you're doing it for your health's sake.

Exercise

Exercise is another excellent way to combat stress. It will make you feel better and more confident. It is particularly good because it will make you fitter, so your health will benefit doubly.

If you start working on stress reduction, you should start seeing improvements in your health right away. Also, even if you don't notice your health improving immediately,

you should still feel confident that it is. The more relaxed you are the better you will feel.

Start working on stress reduction today and have a healthier life tomorrow.

Peter Sachford

Peter Sachford is the webmaster of www.fphelath.com a popular and extensive resource of health information.

Seize The Day! **Gowrings Mobility 40th Anniversary**

To celebrate its 40th anniversary, Gowrings Mobility, the UK's leading supplier of wheelchair passenger vehicles, is organising a fantastic new competition, giving away three specially adapted vehicles, whilst raising at least £100,000 for a group of charities: the Disabled Drivers Association; the Disabled Drivers' Motor Club; Leonard Cheshire; MS Society and Whizz-Kidz. Entry to the competition is via the hotline 09065 500 600 and all proceeds raised will be donated the charities.

Dame Tani-Grey Thompson

Spearheading the 'Seize the Day' competition is Britain's most successful Paralympic athlete and sports personality, Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson. Tanni, who, last year, brought home two Gold medals for Britain at the Athens Paralympics, will be rallying the nation to enter the competition to win a converted vehicle and raise valuable funds for the charities.

The special edition vehicles, manufactured by Gowrings Mobility, allow a wheelchair user to enter the vehicle via a ramp at the rear, and remain in their wheelchair whilst travelling as a passenger. The wheelchair is safely secured using the 4-point wheelchair securing system with a passenger and lap belt for the wheelchair user.

For those people who do not need a wheelchair passenger vehicle themselves, there is the chance to win the car for someone else or an organisation dear to them, such as a local care home, special needs school, local disability charity or community hospital. The Gowrings Mobility website www.gowringmobility.co.uk provides details on how to increase your chances of winning.

Tanni Grey-Thompson commented, "The Seize the Day competition is a great way to mark Gowrings' anniversary, and shows how committed they are to improving the lives and mobility of disabled people. Adapted vehicles are so important to wheelchair users, as they allow you to be spontaneous and go where you want, when you want. Having a Gowrings Mobility vehicle alters your whole outlook on going out - suddenly you stop reflecting on what you can't do, start thinking about what you can do, and then acting upon it."

Tanni's autobiography, 'Seize the Day,' was the inspiration for the name of the Gowrings Mobility 40th anniversary promotion. As Linda Ling, managing director of Gowrings Mobility commented, "Our customers often tell us that they agonise over the decision to buy a wheelchair passenger vehicle for many months, sometimes years. During that time, they simply 'get by' but carry on struggling to go out as a family, or cannot include the wheelchair user in so many trips out. However, once they have their WPV, they tell us they wished they'd made the decision years before! Suddenly, the trip to the shops is easy, and visiting family is a real pleasure again. Owning a Gowrings Mobility car totally changes our customers' lives and allows them to do so much more."

"We are thrilled to be working alongside Tanni," continues Linda Ling. "With her positive attitude, determination and strength, I really think she will inspire everyone to 'seize the day', enter the competition and raise money for these charities that work so hard for people of all ages with disabilities."

Entry to Gowrings Mobility's 'Seize the Day' competition is via a premium rate number 09065 500 600 and the money raised will be donated to the charities. The hotline will

be kept open for the entire year, with the cars presented to the winners at special events throughout year, including Mobility South and Mobility North; and at Christmas.

NEW IMPROVED GOWRINGS MOBILITY WEBSITE

www.gowringmobility.co.uk

Gowrings Mobility, the UK's leading supplier of wheelchair passenger vehicles, has re-designed its website to make it much more informative, user-friendly and easy to navigate. In addition to information on all Gowrings Mobility products, used cars and latest news, the website features a micro-site of 'Seize the Day,' its 40th anniversary competition to win a Gowrings Mobility car.

Motoring means independence

Motability

Motability, set up by the Government in 1977, is the national charity that directs and oversees the Motability Scheme - the UK's leading car scheme for disabled people. Since its inception the Scheme has provided affordable, convenient, trouble-free motoring to almost 400,000 disabled customers and their families.

The Scheme is available to anyone who is receiving the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance, or the War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement and essentially you simply turn your government-funded mobility allowance into the car of your choice.

From October last year Motability revised the criteria for eligibility to the Scheme. The changes give an estimated 150,000 people who were previously unable to take advantage of the Scheme access to the opportunities and freedom it provides.

Motability's enhancements recognise the pattern of awards of the higher rate mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA), which in turn enables those with a disability to use their benefit to receive a brand new car on the Motability Scheme.

Don Brereton, Director of Motability, says;

"In the past, a disabled person receiving the relevant Disability Living Allowance and therefore a potential user of the Motability service could miss out because their award length fell short of the Motability requirements of three years. Motability has now adjusted the requirements of the Scheme to ensure that it is accessible to these people as well. Our experience shows that most of these allowances will be renewed to cover the three year lease of their car."

Choosing the right car

You may already have a clear idea about which make and model of car you would prefer. However, if you are unsure as to its suitability, you may wish to consider the following:-

- Your travel needs, both now and during the next three years.
- Comfort and suitability for you as both driver and perhaps passenger.

- Members of your family or carer who may need to travel with you.
- Any equipment needed to help you in and out of the car.
- Space and easy loading for a wheelchair.
- Special adaptations for your specific needs.

More detailed information can be found in the [Guide to Motability Car Schemes](#), available on request.

The Rt Hon Michael Howard QC MP

The Rt Hon Michael Howard QC MP, Leader of the Opposition, presented the keys of a new Motability Scheme car, to one of his Folkestone and Hythe constituents, Hazel Currie, in October 2004, providing her with increased freedom and opportunities. The presentation took place at Kent Auto Panels Ltd, in Folkestone.

By using her government-funded mobility allowance, Hazel chose a Nissan Almera, which is her third car on the Motability Scheme.

She said: "It is wonderful having a Motability car, it has given me back my Independence and my family don't have to run me everywhere anymore. I find it painful to walk far, so using public transport is really out of the question."

Hazel is 37 and has a severe form of lupus – a condition which causes the body to attack its own cells and tissues, causing inflammation, pain, fatigue and depression; in some cases it can lead to organ damage. "Thankfully, it is in remission at the moment," says Hazel. "I also have Raynaud's disease which causes my hands and feet to be very susceptible to the cold. If I put my hand in the fridge to grab something to eat, that sudden change of temperature can cause numbness and discomfort – it certainly stops me snacking too often!"

Hazel continued: "My health prevents me from working but, when my fingers let me, I enjoy my hobby glass painting. My Mum shares this interest too and we sometimes sell our items at craft fairs, which gives us a lot of satisfaction. I also keep birds, including Parakeets from Australia and New Zealand – countries I dream of visiting one day."

The Rt Hon Michael Howard QC MP, a Senior Parliamentary Patron of Motability said: "It gives me great pleasure to be associated with Motability and to present Hazel with her car. This is just one example of the excellent work which Motability does in providing disabled people with the independence and greater choice they deserve. I wish Hazel happy motoring!"

For more information please call Motability Customer Service on 0845 456 4566 or visit www.motability.co.uk

Fundraising

Many celebrities have, in the past, have given up their valuable time to support Motability. Also, as an individual, there are many ways that you too can become involved in helping people with disabilities. These include raffles, donations, sporting events and the Mobility Recycling Appeal.

If you would like more information about getting involved, or to request a sponsorship form for your own event, please contact the fundraising team on 01279 632 222

Safeguarding our Children

The NSPCC

Founded in 1884 by the Reverend Benjamin Waugh, the NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) is the UK's leading charity specialising in child protection and the prevention of cruelty to children.

It is the only UK children's charity with statutory powers that enable it to take action to safeguard children at risk from abuse.

Employing some 1,800 people in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the NSPCC works within five divisions: three in England, one in Wales and one covering Northern Ireland. Their work is funded by funds raised by a national network of 200 Community Appeals branches and by central fund-raising departments. There are also over 17,000 Community Appeals volunteers who are vital to the success of the fund-raising efforts.

The Mission

The NSPCC's mission is simple: to end cruelty to children. Their vision is a society in which all children are loved, valued and encouraged to fulfil their potential. In other words, a society that will not tolerate child abuse – whether sexual, physical, emotional or neglect.

Their Values

The NSPCC's core values are based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and state that:-

- Children must be protected from all violence and exploitation
- Everyone has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children
- Children and young people need to be listened to and their views respected
- Children should be encouraged and enabled to fulfil their potential
- Inequalities for children and young people will be challenged
- Every child must have someone to turn to

The NSPCC realise that they can't end cruelty on their own. They have a working partnership with a wide range of other professionals, statutory and voluntary agencies and community groups to achieve their goal. This means they can share experience and knowledge about the most effective ways of helping children and develop new approaches to child protection together.

The FULL STOP Campaign

The FULL STOP campaign is the charity's most ambitious challenge to date. The on-going mission is simply to end cruelty to children – FULL STOP.

Statistics on child abuse in the UK show a situation that can no longer be tolerated. Thousands of children are suffering everyday in our supposedly civilised society. The misery of neglect, the pain and fear of sexual and physical abuse and, for at least one child a week, death itself!

Launched with the backing of the Prime Minister, The Right Honourable Tony Blair MP, and countless celebrities, the NSPCC wants you to join the hundreds of thousands of ordinary people, companies and professionals in their fight to end cruelty to children - **FULL STOP.**

Protecting Babies and Toddlers Campaign – Spring 2005

The NSPCC recognises that modern life can be stressful and parents often face a huge task juggling work and bringing up children. Exhaustion, work pressure, illness and relationship or financial problems can contribute to a parent's feelings of anger and frustration. *Sometimes the strain can prove too much.*

The spring campaign encourages parents to ask for help to avoid taking these feelings out on their baby or toddler as well as helping parents to understand how they become angry and stressed and how this behaviour affects their child. There is always help and support if they ever feel that coping with the demands of a baby or toddler are getting too much and they may lose control.

Information is available on the NSPCC's 24-hour child protection helpline on 0808 800 5000

For general information about the charity please ring 0207 825 2711 or visit www.nspcc.org.uk

We're A Happy Lot In The North East

n-e-life.com

The findings of a recent survey conducted by the North East Regional Portal, n-e-life.com suggests that the North East is a great place to live, with 76% of respondents to the online survey stating that they are happy living in the region.

The online study, which covered the fundamental realities of money, relationships, work and environment was conducted in December 2004 and was designed to see how satisfied people are with their lives in the North East.

The survey appears to confirm the old adage that money cannot buy happiness. More than one third of the respondents said 'money neither makes me happy or unhappy' with only 14 percent saying that it made them feel very happy.

Considering the amount of time the English spend discussing it, the weather was not an important factor governing an overall sense of happiness. 43 per cent were not bothered about the weather, and only 5% of the respondents said that the weather could affect their mood significantly.

It is clear that the factors that make people happy is varied, but the one element that had the greatest impact - whether positive or negative - was relationships. 71% say that they are not lonely and this is backed up by data on the current status of close relationships. Almost 62% are in happy romantic relationships and 76% believe they have strong friendships. The survey also highlighted that love and romance scores high in the happiness stakes with 38 percent saying that it made them happy, and more than a third saying that romance makes them 'very happy'. In the family domain, over half the respondents are happy with their relationship with their children with less than 10 percent citing significant problems with their children. Fortunately, most people in the sample had no health problems, although poor health among family members was a problem for almost 50% of respondents.

Job satisfaction is an area that scores well in the survey. Results show one third "completely agree" with the statement "I enjoy going to work" and almost 20 percent love going to work.

Norma Foster, general manager of n-e-life.com said, "This survey is a light hearted way for people to take stock of how they perceive their own quality of life. Often a person's perception of a high quality life is closely linked to their feelings of happiness and contentment. From the results of this survey it would appear that life in the North East is good".

About n-e-life.com

The North East Regional Portal Limited is a fully owned subsidiary of regional development agency One NorthEast. Its main responsibility includes the development of www.n-e-life.com, the region's electronic community for the North East, which provides access to information on every aspect of life in the region for businesses, residents and visitors. The portal service includes free and up to date information on business, entertainment, products and services, tourist attractions, charities, news, sport, lifestyle and business. It also offers 900 business opportunities daily via an online tendering service www.n-e-opportunities.com, which can be tailored to deliver only those that are most relevant to your organisation. Support and advice to help your business start trading online through www.n-e-shopping.com and www.n-e-offers.com is also available.

Don't let them get away with it!

Securit GB

Advertising Feature

You've just bought a shiny new motor bike, or maybe that new lawn mower you've been promising yourself, or even a new mobility scooter. Not the sort of items you can readily keep in the lobby or downstairs loo!

So where do you keep them safely out of sight from the prying eyes of the local opportunist tea-leaf who will happily relieve you of your new gadgets?

Securit GB have the simple answer.

They have developed a new improved range of storage units and believe they are now more secure, quicker to assemble and more usable than ever.

Manufactured from 1.2mm thick galvanised steel, they are easy to assemble and easy to use. Although Securit GB will be happy to assemble on site, anyone can build these units. They will even provide all the spanners, safety gear and sealer you will ever need.

There are also a host of extras including chargers, lighting systems, extra padlocks, alarm systems and even special paint.

Don't let them get away with you prized possessions!

For more information please contact

Securit GB Ltd., Alma Rd., Rotherham, South Yorkshire S60 2HZ Tel.

01709 828 252

www.securit.gb.com

Adventure in the Trees

The Alnwick Garden

Europe's largest and most exciting treehouse ever built for the public was recently opened in the Alnwick Garden in Northumberland.

The £3.3 million turret topped wooden 'fantasy tree village' soars to 60 ft into the air and with 4,000 sq ft of extraordinary suspended satellite walkways, provides an unrivalled experience for both British and international visitors alike. The Treehouse also adds to The Garden's reputation for bold and imaginative design on a vast scale.

Brummie Stokes, design consultant for the Treehouse, is founder of the Taste for Adventure Centre which he runs along with his wife Lynn. This is a registered charity and outdoor activity centre for less privileged children and, for this work, was awarded the MBE.

His involvement with the Taste for Adventure Centre led to his contribution to the Treehouse in the Alnwick Garden.

"The Treehouse is an extremely visionary project" says Brummie. "It will provide both disabled and able-bodied people with an exciting experience. It is very "wheelchair friendly" and the suspended walkways are accessible to all, so everyone can experience the dizzy heights of the trees. I was pleased to lend my support, but the project would not have been realised without the dedication shown by the Alnwick garden team".

The Duchess of Northumberland, a trustee of The Alnwick Garden Trust says, "This incredible treehouse shows that The Alnwick Garden is more than just a garden. Access and activity for those with disabilities was also at the heart of our Treehouse design. Regardless of their ability, children should be encouraged to get outdoors and appreciate nature. Many children now have less opportunity to play than any other generation. We have wonderful plans to expand our 'safely dangerous' play facilities. The idea is to provide a challenge, and include elements of risk, so that the children are better equipped for the future. And why shouldn't the less able-bodied, of all ages, go high up and see life from the trees?"

With its disability and special needs access, kinetic learning approach and ambition to provide children with 'safely dangerous' play regardless of age or ability The Treehouse signals the charity's ambition to provide benefits beyond just economic renaissance as a tourist attraction in the North East.

The charity's five other goals are to promote learning and skills development, access and activity for the disabled, children's play, physical activity for the young and old and experiences of the arts. Indeed progress on many of these charitable objectives has already commenced.

Alison Hamer, Learning Development Manager at The Alnwick Garden adds: "The Treehouse is a symbol of our inspirational approach to learning. Our educational programmes will give people of all ages and abilities opportunities for first hand experience of the dynamic interaction between the activity, science and the arts."

The completion of The Treehouse means that The Alnwick Garden is now halfway to completion. It is being developed and managed by The Alnwick Garden Trust, and would not have come to fruition without the support of everyday people, volunteers, the determination of The Duchess of Northumberland and the support of private and public donors including The Northern Rock Foundation, Northumberland Strategic Partnership, the European Regional Development Fund and OneNE (Regional Development Agency for the North East).

Fundraising and the development of The Garden are ongoing. The inspirational Poison Garden, Bamboo Labyrinth and spectacular interactive water garden, called the Serpent Garden, will all be fully planted and operational for British and international visitors by the spring of this year. A Visitor Centre and Pavilion, designed by Sir Michael Hopkins, is also being built, which uses the latest design and environmental technology.

For more information ring 01665 511350 or visit www.alnwickgarden.com

What you can do! – Not what you can't!

X-Treme Disabled Motor Sport

Are you physically disabled and need some adventure? Then this could be what you've been waiting for

XDM-Extreme Disabled Motor Sport was set up to give the opportunity for disabled people to participate in off-road motor sports. Their mission is to improve the participation in motor sports for people with disabilities and to give the same opportunity to receive quality training, certification and driving adventures as the able bodied population.

They believe leisure time spent with outdoor activities increases quality of life and strive to help make it possible for almost anyone to get out there on their own or with friends and family and experience the awesome feeling of freedom off-road motor sport gives.

What will you be driving?

The Woodstar All terrain Cart is a fully automatic vehicle that can be driven almost anywhere. It is truly an amazing machine that can safely be driven by people with even the most severe disabilities.

Fitted with pressure relief seats enabling people to remain seated for lengthy periods, the Woodstar boasts a state of the art "head steering" mechanism, allowing people with no arm movement to steer by simply moving their crash helmet left or right. The brakes and accelerator can be discretely operated by a straw placed in the mouth: simply suck to accelerate and blow to brake!

Other adaptations include:

- Special cuffs so paralysed hands can be used to operate the throttle and brake.
- Hydraulic steering, enabling weak arms to push and pull.
- Servo controlled acceleration and brake systems.
- One arm drive, one hand steer, throttle and brake.
- Helmet or elbow switches for lights, indicators and starting.

The base model of the ATC works just as well for able bodied persons giving the opportunity for friends and family to participate on an equal footing.

Safety

With "A" frame roll cages, four point harnesses and fire protection systems, all XMD vehicles are very safe to operate. Drivers who cannot extract themselves from a vehicle in a rare emergency are supervised at all times. For younger or more severely disabled drivers an instructor will walk alongside the vehicle. A cut-off cord is provided so, if the driver loses control, the cord is pulled and the vehicle immediately stops.

XMD's insurance and health risk assessments are available to view and all staff are trained in first aid, lifting and handling and are experienced in the field of extreme sports for people of all abilities.

Have a go!

XDM X-Treme Disabled Motor Sport caters for wide range of drivers, regardless of disability. Each person is assessed individually to decide if they can drive the vehicle and which adapted vehicle would suit them.

Where are they?

XDM X-Treme Disabled Motor Sport is situated in 400 acres of Rural North Wales at Cerrigydrudion with easy access from the A5. Although closed in winter, they plan to have the centre open on a full time basis as soon as funding becomes available to allow the luxury of a full time instructor/mechanic and development worker.

They are currently, with the assistance from a number of sponsors and Government backed sports funding, bringing the XMD driving opportunities to venues throughout the country.

Funding

XMD is a "not for profit" organisation and consequently they rely on corporate sponsorship and public donations.

If you feel you or your company could help fund this worthwhile cause either financially or by donating goods/services such as fuel, mechanics services etc., or you simply wish to find out more please tel. 0151 334 8815 or visit www.xdm.org.uk

XMD pride themselves on installing a sense of achievement, self confidence and self esteem in their drivers, regardless of their ability.

What's the Point? – An individual's Dilemma

I am a disabled man and a wheelchair user (age 26) living in a residential home , as there is a lack of accessible accommodation available in my community. I have been on the look out for accessible accommodation for years now.

I was recently offered two jobs as an accessible web design consultant as I design and write websites that meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. This skill is in much demand due to the current disability legislation. Unfortunately I am prevented from taking up these job opportunities due to the methods of funding for people in residential homes.

The home's fees of £930 per week are paid, in part, by money taken from my benefits and in part from Social Services. I cannot afford to work as all money over £20 that I earn (up to the £930 per week!) will be taken off me to help pay for my fees.

There is therefore no monetary advantage to be gained from working and, in addition, the Benefits Agency / Social Services system is notorious for not being able to cope efficiently with variable earnings by people on benefits. It is my contention that whilst I would be happy to pay towards the cost of the home in terms of accommodation, food, bills etc., I shouldn't have to pay for personal care, which takes up the majority of the £930 fee. A sliding scale, whereby a percentage of my earnings are taken to pay for the home's fees - but not all of the earnings bar £20 - would make more sense.

The assumption the Government apparently makes is that all people in residential homes are older (usually retired) or unable to work. This is clearly not the case - I know many younger people in residential homes who are perfectly able to work but are prevented from doing so by Government policy.

What is doubly frustrating is that, if there was suitable accommodation in the community, I would be able to work and keep my earnings - but there simply isn't enough housing for disabled people.

Earlier this year I wrote to many experts asking how I could earn more money. I was told that this was not possible, but that I could apply for an increase in my personal allowance- the money I keep from my benefits after the home's fees are paid. To receive this increase I had to make the case that such an increase would improve my independence. So I am not allowed to earn more and thus improve my independence in that manner, but I can get more money from the taxpayer for doing nothing, as long as I claim it would improve my independence.

The Government's stated policy is to encourage and enable people to return to work. This is good for the disabled person - with more self-esteem and purpose in their life, and more disposable income. It is good for society, which benefits from disabled people's skills. And it is good for the Government, which has to pay out less to support disabled people, in addition to receiving more taxes from their employment.

It is a shame, given the Government's policy, that disabled people in residential homes are prevented from working by the Government's own funding arrangements.

Doug Paulley

Freedom Makes Life Easier

Fiat Freedom from Allied Vehicles

Advertising Feature

Mr Bill Bailey from Sutton, Surrey has been raving about his new Fiat Freedom from Allied Vehicles. "I saw the Freedom for the first time at the Independent Living show in Wembley last year. A Mobility Adviser demonstrated the car to me and I knew it would be ideal for my wife and I to use".

Since the Independent Living exhibition, Bill has been in contact with his Mobility Adviser, Don Miles, who visited Bill and his wife at their home to give them a free personal demonstration. "I am delighted with Don's help. He's been very understanding and has done everything he said he would. We've been out and about in it a lot. My wife, Tina, has MS so we needed a vehicle that was suitable for us. I'm the carer and as I'm getting older I didn't want a vehicle that would be difficult to manage".

Bill continued, "The Fiat Freedom is ideal because the ramp is easy to use and is so much better than the hoist we had on our last vehicle. This is so much more dignified. The electric winch system takes away all my struggle and effort when pushing the wheelchair into the Freedom. I think it's great that the passenger remains in the wheelchair throughout the journey, from start to finish."

Allied Vehicles Managing Director Gavin Giles takes up the story; "People are our most important concern. We need to know that our vehicles meet our customers' requirements. Along with the wheelchair passenger, the driver of the vehicle - often the carer - is crucial in vehicle choice. It is important to us to find the ideal vehicle for both driver and passengers".

Inside the vehicle, Tina sits comfortably, feeling safe and secure and can chat with the rear seat passenger. Additional headroom with large window spaces means that all passengers have a good view.

Bill added: "The vehicle really has given us the Freedom to go out and about. It does what it says it does, it's luxurious for the money and very well appointed. We have air-con, electric windows, CD player, secure floor, follow-me-home lights, the best restraint systems and lots of room. The Freedom is very well thought out and, as the carer, it makes my life so much easier. It's nice to drive and the diesel engine is a bonus too.

Another advantage is that it takes the big wheelchair. It really is very well thought out and the restraint system holds the chair rock-steady. It's absolutely brilliant and the whole process went without a hitch", enthused Bill; "The vehicle was delivered when they said it would be. Excellent service,"

Allied Vehicles have Mobility Advisers throughout the UK who'll bring a demonstrator vehicle to your own home for a free personal demonstration. They can be contacted quickly and easily whenever a customer needs some assistance or advice. All Motability paperwork is taken care of and Allied Vehicles even have their own guide to help you to understand the Motability process in cases where a customer has a Motability allowance that can be used to meet vehicle payments.

To arrange a personal free no-obligation demonstration contact Allied Vehicles on 0800 916 3062. The Allied Vehicles website is useful for product and company information. You can even go on a 'virtual tour' of the vehicles with a special 360 degree feature! Visit www.alliedvehicles.co.uk

James Cracknell Honours Paraplegic Indoor Rowing Champions

James Cracknell, double Olympic rowing gold medallist, honoured Robin Gibbons and Sol Solomou, two paraplegic rowers, with AXA PPP healthcare British Indoor Rowing Championship (BIRC) Gold and Silver medals respectively at a reception in the world famous Leander Club, Henley-on-Thames in December.

Robin and Sol are two members of Brunel University's FES rowing team who took part in last November's AXA PPP healthcare British Indoor Rowing Championship (BIRC). It was the first time that able-bodied and disabled athletes participated in the same category at a major sporting event. Robin completed the 2,000m race in 12.02 minutes and Sol followed just over a minute behind him with a time of 13.59 minutes.

Speaking at the medal presentation, James Cracknell said: "It is an honour for me to present Robin and Sol with these medals. The training that they put into competing in the AXA PPP healthcare British Indoor Rowing Championship has been nothing short of inspirational. I hope that Robin, Sol and other paraplegics will benefit from future developments in FES rowing machines."

Robin and Sol competed in the event using specially adapted Concept 2 indoor rowing machines that utilise functional electrical stimulation (FES) to help paraplegics exercise effectively by stimulating their paralysed leg muscles. The FES rowing machine was developed in collaboration with the UK Charity DEMAND and is a significant breakthrough for people with spinal disability, giving them the opportunity to lead a healthier lifestyle.

Competitive participation at the event has been made possible as a result of the exceptional physical improvements experienced by the competitors since they have been using the FES rowing machine. These include unprecedented levels of cardiovascular fitness, circulation and lymphatic return as well as upper and lower body strength comparable to before their accident and an almost full reversal in muscle wastage of the legs, which can often be as much as 60% after paralysis.

Robin Gibbons has reported that since using the FES rowing machine he now has enough strength in his legs to stand.

Professor Brian Andrews, the Brunel FES project leader said: "I am delighted that Robin and Sol are being rewarded for their willpower and physical hard work over the past few months. Following their success, the Brunel FES development team, along with their Canadian partners in Alberta, is keen to ensure that our findings benefit as many paraplegics as possible. With increased investment it will be possible to improve the lives of paraplegics throughout the world."

Brunel's FES Rower uses a multi channel computerized stimulator with electrodes placed on the skin over the quadriceps and hamstrings. The rower controls each rowing stroke by pressing and releasing a switch that is mounted on the pull bar. The switch is pressed at the "catch" position to start the "drive" phase and released to initiate the "recovery" phase. Together with a specially designed computer control algorithm, smooth coordination is maintained between the voluntary, upper body movement and the electrically stimulated leg movements - effectively recreating a full cardiovascular exercise experience.

Robin Gibbons said: "This medal represents more than just winning a competition. It is the culmination of months of mental and physical hard work. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and I greatly look forward to competing in, and winning, future indoor rowing events. I truly hope that my accomplishment will help to promote the health benefits of rowing to other paraplegics worldwide."

Robin Gibbons: Robin was a Virgin Atlantic pilot until a car crash in January 2001 left him paralysed from the chest down. A former Royal Navy diver, he regularly worked out in the gym and swimming pool, did sub-aqua, windsurfing as well as being a part time fitness instructor. As an extremely physical person prior to his injury, Robin was determined to maintain a high degree of fitness and made contact with Brunel University in 2003. The results for Robin from using the FES rowing machine have been outstanding. Robin is involved in research at Imperial College, London for the International Spinal Research Trust, where his blood flow is regularly measured. Researchers at the College have commented that they have not seen such a healthy blood flow in a T5 complete: Robin's blood flow in his feet is almost identical to that of his hands.

Sol Solomou: Sol had a farming accident 8 years ago, which left him paralyzed from the eighth thoracic vertebra down. Keen to get involved in research projects, he started FES-cycling 4 years ago and has recently taken up the challenge of FES-rowing. Sol believes that FES has improved his overall level of fitness, muscle tone and blood circulation. Sol works part-time for the Spinal Injuries Association's peer support team.

The late Sir Peter Large CBE

A lifetime of achievement

Sir Peter Large CBE, a Governor of the national disability charity Motability, since its inception in 1978, passed away peacefully at home in Warlingham, Surrey, on Sunday 23 January 2005, aged 73 years.

Born on 16 October 1931, Sir Peter studied Civil Engineering at University College London and, following his graduation in 1953, he spent the next two years in National Service with the Royal Navy. He went on to join Shell International in 1956, working in many different countries as an engineer and operations assistant. Six years later, whilst working in Indonesia, Sir Peter contracted poliomyelitis – an infectious viral disease affecting the central nervous system. As a result of this paralysis, affecting his limbs, he became a wheelchair using tetraplegic. In 1966 he joined the Civil Service, working in the Ministry of Technology, and retired from his role there, as a Senior Scientific Officer, in 1991.

Sir Peter has been involved with many national disability organisations spanning over 40 years. These include the British Council for Rehabilitation of the Disabled, the Joint Committee on Mobility for the Disabled, the Association of Disabled Professionals, the Disablement Income Group, the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation, the Access Committee for England, the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee, the National Advisory Council on Employment of Disabled People, and the Disability Living Allowance Advisory Board.

In 1974 he was awarded an MBE and in 1987 he received a CBE. Sir Peter received a Knighthood in 1993 in recognition of his many services to disabled people.

Sir Peter's outstanding achievements were also recognised recently by RADAR (the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation) at their annual People of the Year Human Rights Awards Ceremony, held in London, on 6 December 2004. Sir Peter won the Lifetime Achievement Award in the Furtherance of Human and Civil Rights for Disabled People in the UK. This well deserved accolade recognised the significant work he undertook in campaigning for radically improved provisions for disabled people.

Lord Sterling GCVO CBE, Chairman of Motability, commented: "All of us who had the pleasure and honour of working with Sir Peter over the years have a tremendous admiration for his positive and dedicated commitment to disabled people. He was still giving one hundred per cent to all the causes he supported during his last few days. Our thoughts are with his wife Sheenah, Lady Large, who provided Sir Peter with such loving care and support. - He was a wonderful man and will be greatly missed."