



FAREHAM ACCESS GROUP

DISABILITY DOESN'T
STOP US!



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Blue Badge issues

Thankfully those worrying days in January & February regarding the strong possibility that Blue Badge holders would be charged for parking in the Fareham barrier controlled car parks have been quashed thanks in part to Fareham Access Group and support from Councillors. Many people felt the consultation was rushed, too short and poorly organised.

Unfortunately, the new legislation for inspecting the Blue Badges which became law on 29.09.2006 has caused confusion for many people including Access Officers and Council officers whether the enforcement is for on-street **and** off-street parking in Council car parks. Over the past 20/30 years the pedestrian shopping areas have reduced the number of easy access on- street parking to shops which were available to Blue Badge holders. Now, it is mainly parking in car parks. This is where most of the abuse of the Blue Badge takes place; so it would have made sense for the law to be enforced there too!

To make one point clear; many disabled people have their cars through the Motorability hire Scheme and disabled people give up their Disability Living Allowance (DLA) mobility component during that time. This can give the misconception of owning expensive vehicles.

So often the genuine Blue Badge holder is penalised by the abuse of the badge from others. Personally I feel, in a community where the majority of people do not have a disability or a long standing illness to cope with there should be extra support for those who do. The new FBC Parking Enforcement team of 15 officers will operate under decriminalised parking regulations to monitor on-street parking from 02.04.07.

Blue Badge Inspection

In view of the confusion that there has been with this issue, we have asked the Department of Transport if we have powers to inspect blue badges in off-street car parks. They have replied that we don't.

Source:- Arnold Browne, FBC Engineering Manager 05.02.07.

Blue Badge holders remember when parked anywhere display both badges correctly so that both can be seen on the driver's side of the dash board with the right side facing the windscreen and the clock set at the time of parking. The person who is the Blue Badge holder **MUST** get out of the vehicle. It is illegal to use the Blue Badge so that others can get out even on your behalf and not yourself.

To find out more from the Dept for Transport, Mobility & Inclusion Unit: 020 7944 6550 and 020 7944 8300
www.dft.gov.uk/transportforyou/access/bluebadge

Real Life for people with disabilities can be quite different though!

Queen Alexander Hospital – a patient's concern

In the Rehabilitation Department at Hydrotherapy Photographs taken 21.02.07



Doors: 113cm bottom of window to floor & 120cm from bottom of handles to floor
Hydrotherapy Department reception "Hello, is anyone there?" Even Clare the manager and staff in this department want the barriers removed.

I spoke to Vicky Halliday PALS, Patient Advice & Liaison Service (in open office near main reception) who wrote down my concerns and sent to Glen Hewlett, Director of Development & Estates. I also informed Florise, Tina, Ian & Kathy I know from the Portsmouth *NHS* and Hampshire *PCT*, and Portsmouth Disability Forum; their only reply was a returned receipt. Where is the co-operation and the team spirit with the common inclusion & equality aim? At least Glen has replied as we have been in touch many times: His latest email to me 23.03.07 *"Just to keep you up to date. I am continuing to have ongoing discussions with The Hospital Company (THC) (our redevelopment partner) and Carillion Construction Limited (CCL) (the company building the facilities) on the issues that you have raised with the Rehabilitation centre. Some progress has been made and work is progressing to learn the lessons from the Centre for the rest of the redevelopment.*

Also I believe I now have got acceptance from THC and CCL with regards that there are things that they could have done better or indeed things that may not be compliant.

Making life easier if you are deaf or hard of hearing

If you are among the 1 in 7 people who have a 'significant hearing loss', a Hampshire Sensory Services Leaflet could help so contact the Adult Services Dept, Trafalgar House: 01962 847 208 or ssd.office.services@hants.gov.uk
Source:- Caroline Chance, Communications Officer, Adult Services

RoboBraille is a Pan-European email service for Braille and text-to-speech translation and is free-of-charge for non-commercial users. It can convert electronic documents to contracted Braille or synthetic speech through an efficient and high-quality email service. Website: www.robobraille.org
Contact Ian Beverley, Royal National College for the Blind, Tel: 01432 265725 Ext 2236 or email: ib@rnrb.ac.uk

The next Fareham Access Group Meeting is Tuesday 15th May 07 at the Portchester Parish Hall at 11am for a 11.15am start & finishing at 1.50pm. Enjoy the FREE light lunch, a chat with other members and be involved with local access issues effecting people with disabilities. A guest speaker from Fareham Borough Council will give a presentaion of the taxi service and all the issues surrounding them, so have your questions ready!



FBC Community Grant – FAG successfully received £250.00 of the £500.00 applied for, as a contribution to the FAG 10th Annual General Meeting celebration event.



The group 10th year AGM celebration on 7th March at Ferneham Hall was an amazing experience for everyone. Sincere thanks to all those people who supported and helped us. The feedback on the day was just overwhelming. *I am so glad everyone enjoyed the food, and the meeting. The play was quite amazing, I had goose bumps! It was touching. Thank you for putting your confidence in me. WELL done to you and Richard, you have achieved so much.*

Go on have a laugh!

Bra Codes, A Friend Is Like A Good Bra... Hard to Find Supportive, Comfortable, Always Lifts You Up Never Lets You Down or Leaves You Hanging And Is Always Close To Your Heart!!!

FAG is planning some Trips/Outings this year for members, family & friends. Those with email will receive a copy and for others a hard copy is enclosed.



Fareham Access Group and other groups will be taking part in the HCC **working for schools**. For more information on the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Advisory Service look at our website and under the heading Schools you'll be able to find out more: <http://www.hants.gov.uk/pbr/access/>

Source:- Marcos Frangos, Access and Equalities Manager, Access Team 24.11.06

The first training is 16.04.2007 at Bursledon Community Centre 9.45am – 2pm



Accessibility improves on railway stations in the South East 17 stations are getting money towards improved disabled access from the Dept for Transport's 'Access for All' funding. Access ramps, lifts, low-level ticket counters and accessible toilets. The stations are; 10 in Kent, 5 in Surrey, 2 in West Sussex and Chichester & Littlehampton. Southampton, Havant and Fratton railway stations will get low level counters suitable for wheelchair users.

Source:- Ouch! Newsletter No 173 – 01.03.07 and:- FCA email bulletin No. 60 March 07



Stubbington & Hill Head Voluntary Care Group

Particularly for the benefit of those in need, elderly or disabled people in our local community. They offer the service; transport to medical appointments, collections of shopping, prescriptions or pensions by prior arrangement, visiting the housebound or lonely for a friendly chat and a sitting service to relieve a carer (daytime only). When you need help ring: 07074 775 112 Monday – Friday 9am – 6pm.

Carers The right to request flexible working for carers will come into effect on the 6th April 2007. "The Government understands how difficult it can be for people to balance their work with caring for someone who is sick or disabled. We want to make sure that as many carers as possible have the right to request flexible working while at the same time not placing an unnecessary burden on business. The definition of Carer will be an employee who is or expects to be caring for an adult who:

- * is married to, or the partner or civil partner of the employee; or
- * is a near relative of the employee; or
- * falls into neither category but lives at the same address as the employee.

Source:- Dti website 09.11.2006

Hampshire Carers Direct - New Telephone number 0845 600 4555

The out of hour's advice service for carers in Hampshire, evenings and weekends to 11.30pm or an email address: carershelp.ssdirect@hants.gov.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau = (CAB)

Fareham CAB Office, Fareham Library on the 2nd Floor, Tel: 0870 126 4058 Fax: 01329 283 004 or www.adviceguide.org.uk Fareham, unlike Portsmouth CAB in Cosham doesn't offer an e-mail service for enquiries, but will reply to letters.

Source:- Citizens Advice Bureau leaflet

For accessible accommodation visit: <http://www.accessatlast.com/>

Interested in travel? If you're a disabled or older person with an interest in travel and holidays this site is for you - <http://www.holidaycare.org.uk/>



Mobility Roadshow at Kemble Airfield, Cirencester,

Gloucestershire On the 19th, 20th and 21st July 2007. To find out more Tel: 0845 241 0390 or Tel: 020 8943 5343 email

mobility@ravenstonepr.co.uk Web: <http://www.mobilityroadshow.co.uk/>

This Newsletter is available electronically, in standard & large print and other formats on request to Lorraine Tel: 023 9238 8049. Order your own copy for just £3.00 per annum. Your views on these or any other access issues are welcome