

Disabled Holiday Information **Annual Report November 2008-2009**

This year has been the busiest and most productive the charity has ever had and it really is difficult to highlight all our achievements in this document but we have attempted to include as many as we can.

We published the second edition of our activities guide for Shropshire, researched and published a brand new guide for Cheshire which covers, attractions, accommodation, trails and transport and have researched data for our 4th edition for attractions and accommodation guide for Shropshire which is due to be launched early in 2010.

We have visited and added two new in depth regional pages to our website, one for Cornwall and one for Lancashire. Included in these as well as places to stay and visit were two more adventurous accessible activities, kite bugging on Perranporth beach and all terrain trampers in four country parks on the Fylde coast and the forest of Bowland.

We have attended various awareness events both large and small including Warrington Disability Awareness Day and Enable 09 in Coventry. These are a vital part of our work as they allow us to interact with the users of our information and to take on board their feedback.

We have continued to work closely with the local authority countryside access teams and have joint hosted disability awareness training days for countryside access officers from a variety of organisations including English Nature. These are particularly successful as they enable our volunteers (each with their own individual specific need) to have a direct input into accessibility improvements and to action positive physical changes to accessibility within countryside parks.

We have also extended our work with accommodation and attraction providers to improve their individual access statements, offer on-site advice and support for accessibility improvements and to promote examples of best practice in promoting and providing inclusion for all visitors.

We have been involved in the judging process for Access for All awards at local and regional levels. Our links with other accessibility and disability related organisations have been extended and strengthened.

In addition to our very successful UK wide accommodation search we have introduced new attractions and activities searches. Assisting our volunteer researchers to populate these with accurate information and updating our regional pages will be the main focus of our work in 2010.

We have also improved our news and events web pages and introduced a system for disability related organisations to add their own information.

Our website visitor statistics have reached an all time high of over 23,000 per month and we have received very positive feedback on its content, clarity and ease of navigation. This included a very supportive e-mail from the Secretary of Derby Amputee Club which we had visited and given a talk to earlier in the year. She chose to reinforce this support for our work by nominating the charity for the RADAR 'Doing IT Differently' People of the Year Award. We are pleased to say we have been shortlisted and are awaiting the outcome of the judging process at the awards ceremony in Battersea at the end of November.

Our work continues to expand and develop and most importantly our steadily growing numbers of volunteers are able to achieve measurable results for their input. They are achieving real inclusion for other people with similar needs into a wider variety of leisure time activities. Their continued support and commitment of the Charity's aims and ethos is exemplary and the time and effort they so freely give inspires many people with disabilities to expand their horizons and try similar challenges.

In conclusion the work of the Charity has been extended and improved throughout 2009 and we look forward to the coming year when consolidation of our strengths and improving our existing information service will be our main goals.