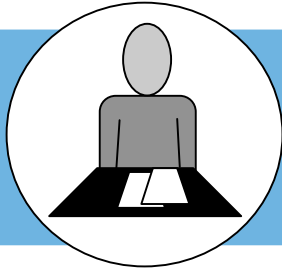


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### **Scottish Criminal Justice and Licensing Law passed with access amendment**

On 6 August 2010, the Scottish Criminal Justice and Licensing Law received Royal Assent. This law includes an amendment which will require applicants for new full premises licences to demonstrate how accessible their premises are. The amendment follows a campaign by wheelchair user Mark Cooper for a comprehensive listing of pubs with accessible toilet facilities. Mr Cooper worked with Capability Scotland to raise awareness about his campaign nationally.

However, Susan Clark of Edinburgh City Council licensing board said that there were some flaws with the new legislation that would need to be addressed. She explained: 'Only applicants for new full premises licences need give this assessment, not new provisional licences. If someone wanted to avoid applying, they could take just out a provisional licence.' She also said that the law only applied to new premises, not to the nearly 2,000 premises which already have licenses in the city.

For the full story, visit the **Guardian website**

<http://tinyurl.com/guardian-scot-licensing>

To view the Act, visit the **Scottish Parliament website**

[www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/24-CrimJustLc/index.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/24-CrimJustLc/index.htm)

### **Concerns raised over Right to build policy**

Concerns have been raised over the Government's Community Right to Build plans, which will be central to the forthcoming Localism Bill. The Right to Build aims to give communities the power to deliver new housing and development without the need for planning permission, as long as there is overwhelming community support in a local referendum. The plans aim to ensure that any surplus made from the sale or renting of homes would be recycled for the benefit of the community. Under the Right to Build, community organisations could also choose

to build sheltered housing, or set aside plots for people to build their own homes, or offer long-term, low rent deals for local shops, community halls or sports facilities.

However, both the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) and the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) have expressed concerns about the proposals. Fiona Howie, Head of Planning at CPRE, said: 'The level and location of development should be informed by a proper assessment of local housing need and an understanding of whether the local environment can accommodate more development. This capacity should be accessed through democratic local plans and not a simple public ballot.'

Jamie Hodge, spokesperson for the RTPI, said: 'Proper planning scrutiny has served us well, whereas this proposal appears to disempower local authorities by removing their right to determine development proposals and may mean that new housing built as a result may conflict with existing wider community priorities, and will only have to meet nationally prescribed minimum standards, even if the local authority wishes to see higher design standards in its own area.'

For the full story, visit the **Planning Portal website**

<http://tinyurl.com/right-to-build-concerns>

### **Campaigners urge CLG not to overlook planning above local level**

An alliance of 29 groups has written to the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Secretary Eric Pickles, urging the Government not to overlook planning at a 'larger than local level'. The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) organised the letter, whose signatories include the British Property Federation, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and the homeless charity Shelter.

Ann Skippers, President of the RTPI said: 'Communities need some level of strategic thinking beyond the local level to deliver many of the things they want, such as hospitals, transport links, waste management and flood protection. The most pressing issues facing the nation, for example, such as the housing crisis,

economic recovery, climate change and biodiversity loss, cannot be dealt with solely at a local level.'

She added: 'We have come together to offer to work with the Coalition Government and local authorities to help to develop thinking, policies and systems for planning to encourage and support joint planning across local authority boundaries so that the localism agenda may be used to enable democratic strategic planning to take place.'

However, the *Financial Times* reported a spokesman for Communities and Local Government spokesperson defending the move towards localism. He said: 'The current top-down bureaucratic planning model has been very good at generating impressive-sounding numbers but built nothing but resentment. By allowing communities to shape their neighbourhoods and share in the benefits, we are beginning to restore the idea that development can be a force for good, rather than something to be resisted at all costs.'

To view background information and the text of the letter, visit the **RTIP website** [www.rtpi.org.uk/item/3937/23/5/3](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/3937/23/5/3)

For the Financial Times report, visit the **Financial Times website** [www.ft.com/cms/s/0/a880c3ac-9ff9-11df-8cc5-00144feabdc0.html](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/a880c3ac-9ff9-11df-8cc5-00144feabdc0.html)

### **EHRC asks Government to consider legal obligations regarding Budget cuts**

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has asked the Government to demonstrate that it has met its legal obligations to consider the effect of budget cuts on particular people. The EHRC has stated that its aim is to ensure that decision-makers come to their judgements based on the best information available, and that these decisions are in line with the Government's statements that such decisions should be evidence-based, fair and transparent. The Government's emergency Budget, released in June, outlined a number of cuts and included proposals to introduce a new test for the Disability Living Allowance.

Neil Kinghan, Director General of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, said: 'Under equality legislation, the Treasury, like all public bodies, has a legal duty to pay "due regard" to equality and consider any disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups when making decisions, including decisions about the budget.'

He added: 'When the Spending Review was announced in June, the Commission wrote to government departments, including the Treasury, asking for reassurance that they would comply with the legislation and issuing guidance to help them to do this. It is for the Treasury to demonstrate that it has complied with the legislation and assessed the impact of its decisions on vulnerable groups. If it cannot do so, then the Commission will have to consider appropriate enforcement action.'

Methods of enforcement available to the EHRC include inquiries, assessments to test compliance with public sector duties and formal agreement with individuals it believes has committed an unlawful act, which involves putting in place an action plan.

For further information, visit the **EHRC website**

<http://tinyurl.com/ehrc-budget>

### **President Obama announces ADA regulations update**

At a ceremony celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), US President Barack Obama announced the release of updated regulations and standards relating to the ADA, as well as other administrative initiatives to promote equality for disabled people. The US Department of Justice regulations update ADA standards governing the construction and alteration of facilities covered by the ADA, including places of public accommodation, commercial facilities, and state and local government facilities. The new standards are based on revised minimum guidelines previously established by the American Access Board. They include supplements for certain types of facilities and sites not addressed before, such as recreational facilities and municipal facilities.

The regulations allow the choice of following either the updated standards or the original standards during the first 18 months. After this period of time, use of the 2010 standards will become mandatory. This is to allow sufficient time for a transition to the updated standards so as not to disrupt design and construction projects already underway. The new rules also revise or supplement other sections of its ADA regulations, including those covering existing facilities, assistance animals, policies and programmes, maintenance of accessible features, auxiliary aids and services, and effective communication.

Mr Obama said: 'Today, the Department of Justice is publishing two new rules prohibiting disability-based discrimination, and beginning 18 months from now, all new buildings must be constructed in a way that's compliant with the new 2010 standards for the design of doors and windows and elevators and bathrooms – buildings like stores and restaurants and schools and stadiums and hospitals and hotels and theatres.'

For the full story, visit the **Access Board website**

[www.access-board.gov/news/obama-ada.htm](http://www.access-board.gov/news/obama-ada.htm)

### **Work Choice programme launched**

The Government has announced the launch of a programme to provide support for disabled people who face the most complex and long-term barriers to employment, and who may require high intensity support in the workplace. The new programme, called Work Choice, will replace the Specialist Disability Employment Programme, and will be introduced in October 2010.

Maria Miller, Minister for Disabled People, said: 'Work Choice will greatly improve upon the effectiveness of current provision by tailoring support to the needs of each severely disabled individual to help move them into and stay in long-term sustainable jobs.'

She added: 'It will replace the existing confusing array of DWP specialist disability employment provision (WORKSTEP, Work Preparation and the Job Introduction Scheme) across England, Scotland and Wales.'

To view the ministerial statement, visit the **Parliament UK website**

<http://tinyurl.com/work-choice-statement>

### **Legislation: Malcolm test shown to be applicable in employment cases**

In a decision handed down in the case of Aylott v Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, the Court of Appeal has confirmed that the House of Lords decision in the housing case of London Borough of Lewisham v Malcolm (2008) regarding the appropriate comparator for disability-related discrimination also applies to employment cases. In the Malcolm case the House of Lords overturned the Court of Appeal decision in Clark v TDG Ltd t/a Novacold (1999), which established that a disabled person does not have to compare him- or herself with an individual in the same, or not materially different, circumstances. The House of Lords found that the correct comparator for the tenant Mr Malcolm, who is schizophrenic, should be a person who is not disabled who has sublet a Lewisham flat.

Mr Aylott, who has bipolar affective disorder, joined Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council in 2003. Shortly after becoming a manager, he raised 17 grievances with respect to colleagues. He went on a paid leave of absence and his complaints were dealt with but rejected under the employer's dignity at work procedure. Following his return from a year's absence, Mr Aylott claimed that strict deadlines were set for him and that he was closely monitored. He took a further two months' sick leave and was reported to have behaved aggressively during a return-to-work meeting. His manager said that his behaviour, which had been witnessed by other staff, was 'unprofessional, intimidating and wholly inappropriate'. The employer withdrew a planned suspension and disciplinary investigation when Mr Aylott was hospitalised. Following further medical advice, Mr Aylott was dismissed with two months' notice for health reasons.

At an employment tribunal, Mr Aylott succeeded in his claims for, among other things, direct disability discrimination and disability-related discrimination. The tribunal held that the appropriate comparator is someone who has been off for a similar number of days but does not have the claimant's disability. It gave the example of someone who has a similar sickness record in respect of a complicated broken bone or other surgical problem, whom it said would not have been subjected to the same treatment. The tribunal also felt that the council had displayed a 'stereotypical view of mental illness'.

However, at appeal the Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) found the employment tribunal's decision to be 'wholly flawed'. In particular, the EAT said that the employment tribunal had not constructed a detailed enough comparator. It was not sufficient for it to select as a hypothetical comparator someone who has a similar sickness record returning to work. The EAT also overturned the employment tribunal decision in relation to disability-related discrimination on the basis that it had relied on the case of *Clark v TDG Ltd t/a Novacold*, which was overturned by *London Borough of Lewisham v Malcolm* shortly after the tribunal made its ruling.

The Court of Appeal restored the employment tribunal's findings on direct discrimination, saying that it could not be criticised for leaving Mr Aylott's behavioural and performance difficulties, which were directly related to his disability, out of its formulation of the hypothetical comparator. In addition, the Court of Appeal found that the EAT had been wrong to overturn the employment tribunal's decision on the employer stereotyping mental illness. Direct discrimination can occur when assumptions are made that a claimant has characteristics associated with a group to which he or she belongs, irrespective of whether or not the claimant or most members of the group have those characteristics.

However, the Court of Appeal did acknowledge that the tribunal's decision on disability-related discrimination could not stand. It stressed that the decision in *Malcolm* applies in employment cases and that *Novacold* is 'deceased as a case'. The proper comparator when disability-related discrimination is alleged is someone

who has behaved in the same way as the person concerned, but does not have that person's disability, rather than someone who had not acted in the way that caused the employer to treat the employee as it did.

For further information, visit the **Xpert HR website**

<http://tinyurl.com/malcolm-test-employment>

### **Train conductor suspended after refusing to help disabled passenger**

A train conductor for Northern Rail has been suspended after refusing to provide a ramp for a disabled passenger wanting to board a carriage at Manchester Piccadilly. Qamar Khaliq, a wheelchair user, filmed the guard's refusal after he had repeatedly asked for a ramp so that he could board the train. Northern Rail has since apologised for the incident, and has launched an investigation.

Mr Khaliq said: 'When I asked for his assistance he made a no sign at me and said "I can't take you, you will have to get the next one". When I asked him why he refused to answer me and then refused to speak at all and just ignored me.'

Mr Khaliq said his journey ended up taking him nearly two hours because he had to travel by bus.

Pete Myers, Head of Service Quality for Northern Rail, said: 'We do take incidents like this very seriously indeed, and thankfully they are extremely rare. I can confirm that we have taken steps to suspend the conductor from duty while our investigation progresses.'

For the full story, visit the **BBC News website**

[www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-11075433](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-11075433)

### **Survey highlights discrimination against people with learning disabilities**

The health and social care provider Turning Point has released the results of survey indicating that many people believe that people with a learning disability are

the most discriminated against group in society. Nine-out-of-ten of those questioned said they believe individuals with a learning disability still experience discrimination, with more than half thinking they are the most discriminated against group in society. This proportion comes above other groups often perceived to experience discrimination including homosexuals and ethnic minorities.

A third of respondents said they thought that people with learning disabilities cannot live independently or undertake employment. Twenty-three per cent of people surveyed expect people with learning disabilities to be living in care homes, while nearly eight per cent say they would expect them to be cared for in a secure hospital out of town. In addition, 32 per cent of respondents wrongly identified mental illness as a learning disability, while 24 per cent classified dementia as one.

Adam Penwarden, Director of Learning Disability Services at Turning Point, said: 'People often think individuals with a learning disability are "different" and discriminate against them because of this. As a sector, we need to work together to challenge preconceptions and show what a positive contribution to society people with a learning disability can make.'

For further information, visit the **Turning Point website**

[www.turning-point.co.uk/News/Pages/Publicstilldiscriminate.aspx](http://www.turning-point.co.uk/News/Pages/Publicstilldiscriminate.aspx)

### **Audit Commission to be abolished**

The Secretary for Communities and Local Government (CLG), Eric Pickles, has announced plans to abolish the Audit Commission, which oversees and delivers local audit and inspections, and to transfer its functions to the private sector. In its place, the Government plans to facilitate communities to hold their councils and local public bodies to account for local spending decisions. Councils will be able to appoint independent auditors and there will be a new new audit framework for local health bodies.

A range of options will be developed for converting the audit practice into a business independent of Government which could be sold or otherwise transferred

into the private sector. The Government has confirmed that the powers of the separate Local Government Ombudsman will be strengthened, to give residents greater rights when local services go wrong. It has also stated that audit quality will be regulated within a statutory framework, overseen by the National Audit Office, and that inspection and intervention will remain for certain services, including children's services and adult social care.

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Eric Pickles said: 'Audit should remain to ensure taxpayers' money is properly spent, but this can be done in a competitive environment, drawing on professional audit expertise across the country.'

He added: 'These proposed changes go hand in hand with plans to create an army of armchair auditors - local people able to hold local bodies to account for the way their tax pounds are spent and what that money is delivering.'

For further information, visit the **CLG website**

[www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1688109](http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1688109)

### **CLG announces changes to council service improvement funding**

Communities and Local Government (CLG) has announced proposals to change the way council service improvements and training to local government leaders are funded. At present central government directs the funding to be received by nine local government improvement organisations. Under the proposals, a body such as the Local Government Association (LGA) will take control over how to use the funding. The total grant, which the LGA has suggested could be reduced by 30 per cent, would not be ring-fenced and delegated to the designated body to allocate to funding programmes to improve council services, meet learning and development needs and sustain local economies.

The plans are aimed at removing centrally-imposed restrictions on how funding is used, which the Government believes will help reduce overhead costs, red tape

and waste in local improvement support and promote better use of resources, better productivity and stronger local leadership.

The Minister for Communities and Local Government, Bob Neill, said: 'The LGA have called for this change, and have rightly taken steps to make their organisation more transparent so we can look at how to devolve this funding with confidence. By cutting the red tape around improvement funding councils can push even harder to make sure they have the tools and expertise to be fully focused on delivering frontline services that matter to people most and getting the best value for taxpayers' money.'

For further information, visit the **CLG website**

[www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1697357](http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1697357)

### **Changes to community equipment services**

The Department of Health (DH) has announced plans to change its community equipment services. Community equipment ranges from simple aids to daily living, such as eating and drinking utensils, grabrails and raised toilet seats, to more complex equipment such as beds, hoists and lifts. The DH has identified problems with the way this service is provided to users. These include a failure to meet the needs of the whole population, services being at risk where local budgets are under pressure, and a failure to promote independence, choice and control.

Among the proposals to improve the system are:

- a new service delivery model
- plans to move simple aids to daily living into the retail marketplace
- plans to create alternatives to public provision through stimulation of the retail marketplace and by making use of the third and private sectors
- plans to empower individuals to self help
- a more efficient supply chain for complex aids to daily living

For further information, visit the **DH website**

[www.dhcarenetworks.org.uk/csed/TransformingCommunityEquipmentService/](http://www.dhcarenetworks.org.uk/csed/TransformingCommunityEquipmentService/)

## **Closure of Hearing Aid Council**

The Hearing Aid Council (HAC) closed as a Non-departmental Public Body on 1 August 2010. The decision to close the Council was announced in 2005 in response to recommendations made by the Hampton Report on Regulatory Inspections and Enforcement. It concluded that the overall number of regulating authorities should be rationalised. In April 2010 responsibility for the regulation of hearing aid dispensers was transferred to the Health Professions Council (HPC).

Consumer Minister Edward Davey said: 'I am grateful for the hard work and dedication of the Hearing Aid Council over the last 40 years. In recent months the staff have also worked professionally to prepare industry, consumers and stakeholders for the transfer of powers to the Health Professions Council.

He added: 'The Government is committed to reducing the number and costs of quangos. Steps to abolish the Hearing Aid Council precede the current Government, but its abolition is nevertheless a small step towards that commitment.'

For more information, visit the **Department for Business, Innovations and Skills website**

[www.bis.gov.uk/news](http://www.bis.gov.uk/news)

## **Project creating jobs for ASC people in Scotland launched**

The Scottish Government has awarded £700,000 to a project to create 50 IT jobs for people with autistic spectrum conditions (ASC), which has also received funding from the Big Lottery Fund and Glasgow City Council. The Specialisterne project, which was set up by Community Enterprise in Scotland with the help of the National Autistic Society Scotland and the Autism Resource Centre, will use the money to recruit and train staff. It is based on a Danish model which employs people with ASC as software testers. Only 13 per cent of adults with ASC in Scotland are thought to be in full-time work.

People recruited to the project will undergo a four-month training programme using Lego Mindstorm sets and robotics to identify and match their skills to work tasks. To ensure that trainees achieve their full potential, Specialisterne aims to create a highly-planned and predictable working environment to minimise stress. As a social enterprise, Specialisterne Scotland will re-invest any profit to help create jobs for people with ASC.

Community Enterprise in Scotland Chief Executive, Gerry Higgins, said: 'We know from the experience in Denmark that Specialisterne Scotland has the potential to change lives for the better by providing mainstream employment at the market rate for people with autism, while transforming recruitment attitudes and business practices. The company will commence commercial testing in early 2011 following recruitment and training of the workforce. By 2015 we expect to employ a total of 61 people, 50 of whom will have autism and have a projected turnover of £1.6m.'

For the full story, visit the **BBC News website**

[www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-10857029](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-10857029)

### **Author Kate Atkinson supports RNIB Right to Read campaign**

The award-winning author Kate Atkinson has lent her support to the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) Right to Read campaign, which promotes the production of literature in accessible media such as Braille and audio formats. Ms Atkinson read from her novel *Started early, took my dog* at an event organised by RNIB Scotland as part of the Edinburgh International Book Festival. RNIB Scotland launched a Braille and audio version of the novel at the event, but representatives from the charity pointed out that only five per cent of books published in the UK are produced in accessible formats. Authors such as James Kelman, Janice Galloway and A L Kennedy have previously supported RNIB Scotland with readings from their work.

Ms Atkinson said: 'I am absolutely delighted that RNIB Scotland has transcribed my latest novel and released it just one day after its mainstream publication. I

couldn't imagine being limited to the tiny number of books that are available in accessible formats.'

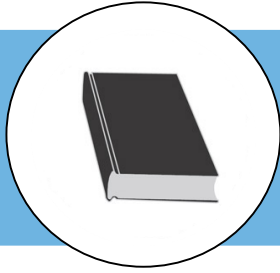
John Legg, director of RNIB Scotland, said: 'We are very pleased to have such an internationally renowned and popular author as Kate Atkinson launch our transcribed version of her latest novel.'

He added: 'We also want to highlight the fact that only five per cent of published books ever make it into alternative formats such as braille or audio. That's a very small proportion – needlessly small, given the potential of today's new technology. We'd like to see many more books made available in accessible formats.'

The event was sponsored by City Building LLP, whose manufacturing division RSBi employs 30 visually impaired workers.

For further information, visit the **RNIB website**

<http://tinyurl.com/rnib-reading-event>



## Publications, consultations and reports

### **Revisions to BS for accessible building design: BS 8300:2009 + A1:2010**

The British Standard Institute has made slight modifications to the best practice guidance BS 8300:2009 *Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people*. The revised document is called BS 8300:2009 + A1:2010.

Changes from the BS 8300:2009 include the following:

- **4.2.1.1 (p9) Designated off-street parking – general provision**

The enlarged standard space dimensions have increased to 3.6m wide from 3m. They are now 3.6m wide by 6m long.

- **5.10.2 Handrail design (p29)**

*Note 1: The external perimeter of between 100mm and 160mm is the optimum size to provide a power grip around a handrail.*

The maximum number of the range has been increased to 160mm from 140mm.

- **5.10.3 Handrail dimensions and spacings (p30)**

Oval profile dimensions have changed by 1mm to 50mm wide and 39mm deep (from 38mm). Circular handrail diameter has been increased to between 32mm and 50mm (formerly maximum was 45mm). Clearance between handrail and adjacent surface/wall had been reduced to between 50mm (from 60mm) and 75mm.

*Note: Where a **50mm diameter circular handrail** is used, a **50mm spacing from the wall** allows the handrail to project no more than 100mm into the width of the stair.*

The circular handrail diameter has been increased by 10mm from 40 to 50mm.

The spacing from the wall has been reduced by 10mm from 60 to 50mm.

- **5.10.4 Handrail fixings (p30)**

Change of BS related to handrails from BS 6399-1 to BS EN 1991-1-1.

- **6.5.6.1 Panic exit devices (p45)**

A change to the release force required for panic devices operated by a horizontal bar for use on escape routes should conform to BS EN 1125:2008. 4.2.1.1 (formerly 4.2.1.2). This has decreased from a maximum of 220 N to 80 N.

- **Bibliography (p205)**

BS 5395-1:2010 Stairs, ladders and walkways Part 1 Code of Practice is the updated version of BS5395-1:2000.

To order a copy of the new BS 8300, visit the **BSI shop website**

<http://shop.bsigroup.com/en/ProductDetail/?pid=00000000030217421>

### **Public sector Equality Duty consultation**

The Government Equalities Office (GEO) is holding a consultation on the public sector Equality Duty. A crucial part of the Equality Act 2010, this duty is designed to help ensure that fairness is at the heart of public bodies' work and that public services meet the needs of different groups. The Act also gives ministers the power to impose specific duties, which are legal requirements designed to help public bodies meet their obligations under the public sector Equality Duty.

This consultation seeks views on proposals for draft regulations for the specific duties and the list of public bodies that will be subject to the general and specific duties.

The GEO has stated that this consultation will be of interest to:

- public bodies
- those monitoring the performance of public bodies
- others who perform public functions

- organisations that are interested in how public services can eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations

In addition, the GEO would welcome comments from other interested parties.

The closing date for this consultation is **10 November 2010**.

To respond to the consultation, visit the **GEO website**

[www.equalities.gov.uk/news/specific\\_duties\\_consultation.aspx](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/news/specific_duties_consultation.aspx)

### **Consultation on guidance about definition of disability in Equality Act**

The legal definition of a disabled person in the Equality Act differs slightly from the definition used in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) is updating the guidance to help people understand how the definition works to reflect this change. The ODI has published draft guidance along with a consultation document, and is seeking views on whether the draft guidance will help people understand the definition of disability.

The ODI has stated that it is particularly interested in views from organisations such as courts and tribunals that will use the guidance when deciding whether someone is a disabled person. It will also be of interest to people and organisations that give advice about the Act.

The consultation closes on **31 October 2010**.

To respond to the consultation, visit the **ODI website**

[www.officefordisability.gov.uk/working/equality-bill.php](http://www.officefordisability.gov.uk/working/equality-bill.php)

### **EHRC publishes Equality Act non-statutory guidance**

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has published a series of guidance documents to help explain the Equality Act and provide practical

examples illustrating how the law has changed. There are guidance documents for employers and worker, service providers and service users.

Topics covered in employment include:

- recruitment
- flexible working
- pay and benefits
- training and development
- dismissal and redundancy
- good practice in policies and procedures

Topics covered in services include:

- commercial organisations
- associations and clubs
- voluntary and community sector organisations
- criminal and civil justice systems
- healthcare and social care services
- public bodies

These will not replace the statutory Codes of Practice for the Equality Act, which will shortly be laid before Parliament.

To view the guidance, visit the **EHRC website**

<http://tinyurl.com/non-statutory-guidance-publish>

### **Mind the step: Report estimating accessible housing requirement**

Habinteg Housing Association and London South Bank University, supported by the Homes and Communities agency, have published a research report named *Mind the step: An estimation of housing need among wheelchair users in England*. The publication examines a range of data on housing for wheelchair users. It states that 84 per cent of homes in England do not allow a wheelchair

user to get to and through the front door without difficulty, and that only 0.5 per cent of homes are reported to be 'accessible and adaptable'. It estimates that 78,300 wheelchair user households, or 13 per cent of all wheelchair user households, are in housing need, which translates to an estimated 240 households in an 'average' local housing authority. The research also identifies barriers to housing choice and mobility, such as the lack of information on accessible homes, inefficient use of vacant properties, low priority given to the need for independent living and inflexible financing of care/support services.

The report identifies three solutions, which it says should be strategically interlinked, to help counteract the shortage of accessible housing:

- the development of new wheelchair standard homes for owner-occupiers and tenants
- support for home adaptations across tenures
- efficient allocation, in social housing, of accessible and adaptable homes

It also provides guidance on how local authorities can provide estimates for unmet housing need, and recommends using accessible housing registers to analyse housing stock.

To download the report for free, or to order a hard copy, visit the **Habinteg website**

[www.habinteg.org.uk/main.cfm?type=MINDTHESTEP](http://www.habinteg.org.uk/main.cfm?type=MINDTHESTEP)

### **Calls for evidence: Parliamentary reviews of planning reforms**

Two parliamentary inquiries are being held into aspects of the Government's reforms to the planning system. The inquiries, held by the all-party Communities and Local Government Committee, will look at the decision to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) and the Government's localism agenda. Oral evidence sessions will take place later this year, and calls for evidence from interested parties for both inquiries have been launched.

## **Regional Spatial Strategy inquiry**

This will focus particularly on the implications for house building, especially:

- the implications of the abolition of regional house building targets for levels of housing development
- the likely effectiveness of the Government's plan to incentivise local communities to accept new housing development, and the nature and level of the incentives which be required to ensure an adequate long-term supply of housing

It will also consider:

- the arrangements which should be put in place to ensure appropriate cooperation between local planning authorities on matters formerly covered by Regional Spatial Strategies
- the adequacy of proposals put forward by the Government, including a proposed duty to cooperate and the suggestion that Local Enterprise Partnerships may fulfil a planning function
- how the data and research collated by the abolished Regional Local Authority Leaders' Boards should be made available to local authorities, and what arrangements should be put in place to ensure effective updating of that research and collection of further research on matters crossing local authority boundaries.

The deadline for written submissions to the RSS inquiry is **15 September 2010**.

To respond to the call for evidence, visit the **Parliament UK website**

<http://tinyurl.com/inquiry-rss>

## **Localism inquiry**

Among other things, this inquiry will consider:

- the extent to which decentralisation leads to more effective public service delivery, and what the limits are, or should be, of localism
- the lessons for decentralisation from Total Place, and the potential to build on the work done under that initiative, particularly through place-based budgeting
- the role of local government in a decentralised model of local public service delivery, and the extent to which localism can and should extend to other local agents
- the action which will be necessary on the part of Whitehall departments to achieve effective decentralised public service delivery
- the impact of decentralisation on the achievement of savings in the cost of local public services and the effective targeting of cuts to those services
- how effective and appropriate accountability can be achieved for expenditure on the delivery of local services, especially for that voted by Parliament rather than raised locally

The Committee has stated that it would be particularly interested to hear of examples, from the UK or overseas, of models of decentralised public service delivery from which lessons could be learnt for further decentralisation in England.

The deadline for submissions to the localism inquiry is **1 October 2010**.

To respond to the call for evidence, visit the **Parliament UK website** <http://tinyurl.com/inquiry-localism>

### **Interim London Housing Design Guide published**

The London Development Agency (LDA) has published an interim version of the Mayor of London's *London housing design guide*, which will soon become a requirement for publicly-funded homes. The guide aims to provide consistency and clarity about what is expected in London from the outset of a development,

through a consolidated and simplified set of standards. The standards are anticipated to be taken forward through the Mayor's forthcoming draft Housing Supplementary Planning Guide.

This interim edition follows a cost impact assessment and the public consultation on the draft London Housing Design Guide. It may be subject to further changes following the Examination in Public of the London Plan and the finalisation of the Homes and Communities Agency design standards review.

To download the guide, visit the **LDA website**

[www.lda.gov.uk/publications-and-media/publications/design-guide.aspx](http://www.lda.gov.uk/publications-and-media/publications/design-guide.aspx)

### **London public transport accessibility consultation**

The London Assembly's Transport Committee is investigating how accessible London's public transport network is, and how it could be improved. The Committee wants to determine whether, with budget pressures and competing priorities, the Mayor's and Transport for London's commitments to improving accessibility are translating into action. The Transport Committee will be evaluating the success of initiatives to improve accessibility, with a view to identifying practical and cost-effective ways of making the public transport network more user-friendly. It will consider the whole journey experience of disabled and older people and those with buggies and young children.

As part of this investigation, the Transport Committee has asked for people to contribute their experiences of travelling on public transport. The deadline for submitting responses is **30 September 2010**.

For further information, visit the **Greater London Authority website**

[www.london.gov.uk/assembly/transport-access](http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/transport-access)

### **Scottish Technical Handbooks: Key changes summary document**

The new 2010 versions of the Scottish Technical Handbooks come into force on 1 October 2010. To help practitioners using the Handbooks, the Scottish Government has published a document summarising the key changes. Corrections to Section 4, Safety, include updated references to the British Standard and the removal of an incorrect 'going' location in the section on stairs and ramps.

To download the document, visit the Scottish Government website

<http://tinyurl.com/technical-handbook-summary>

### **Amended versions of lift standards BS EN 81-1 and BS EN 81-2**

The British Standards Institute (BSI) has announced the release of amended versions of BS EN 81-1:1998+A3:2009 Safety rules for the construction and installation of lifts – Electric lifts and BS EN 81-2:1998+A3:2009 *Safety rules for the construction and installation of lifts – Hydraulic lifts*.

The amendments made include the following:

- incorporation of essential health and safety requirements from the relevant EU Directives
- incorporation of proposals resulting from interpretation requests dealing with the improvement relative to the progress in technology
- updated references to other standards

For further details, and to obtain a copy of these standards, visit the **BSI shop website**

<http://tinyurl.com/bs-lift-standards>

### **Traiblazers report causes EasyJet to clarify airline policy**

The Muscular Dystrophy Campaign's *Trailblazers* group has published an investigation into airline policies relating to the carriage of wheelchairs. According to the report, entitled *All inclusive?*, the airline EasyJet refused to allow people

with powered wheelchairs weighing over 60kg (excluding batteries) on their flights, citing health and safety as a reason.

The report also states that airlines such as Ryanair and BMI do not allow customers to use their own oxygen canisters, instead charging £100 for people who require permanent ventilation. Other issues highlighted are a lack of accessible aeroplanes, which can prevent disabled people from being able to access the toilet, and incidents in which travellers reported their wheelchairs being broken by careless handling, leaving them without any means to get around on holiday.

Since the report has been made public, EasyJet has changed the policy on their website to state that wheelchairs and mobility aids weighing more than 60kg (excluding batteries) can be accepted for travel provided that they can be collapsed into separate parts weighing less than 60kg each.

To download the report, visit the **Muscular Dystrophy Trailblazers website** [www.mdctrailblazers.org/news/621](http://www.mdctrailblazers.org/news/621)

### **New school site planning guidance published**

Further to the Academies Act 2010, which received Royal Assent on 28 July, Communities and Local Government (CLG) has published new principles for councils to consider when determining planning applications for school developments with local support have been published. The guidance has been published to give people promoting schools confidence about progressing their proposals, and to allow new free schools with local support to be set up quickly.

Local planning authorities and the Planning Inspectorate will be expected to take the statement by Communities Secretary Eric Pickles into account as a material consideration when determining all planning applications for school development.

The guidance explains that in determining planning applications, local authorities should:

- attach very significant weight to the desirability of establishing new schools and to enabling local people to do so
- adopt a positive and constructive approach towards applications to create new schools, and seek to mitigate any negative impacts of development through the use of planning conditions or planning obligations, as appropriate
- only refuse planning permission for a new school if the adverse planning impacts on the local area outweigh the desirability of establishing a school in that area. Where a local authority refuses permission on this basis, the Government will ask the Planning Inspectorate to deal swiftly with any appeal that is lodged

The Government will shortly be consulting on proposed changes to the Use Classes Order, with the aim of reducing unnecessary regulation and making it easier for buildings currently used for other uses to be converted to schools.

To download the principles, visit the **CLG website**

[www.communities.gov.uk/newsstories/planningandbuilding/16225341](http://www.communities.gov.uk/newsstories/planningandbuilding/16225341)

### **ODI guidance for Civil Service officials**

The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) has released a range of guidance documents aimed at communications and policy professionals within the Civil Service. The guides show how accessible and inclusive policies can be delivered without increased cost or time implications. They can be downloaded free of charge.

The titles of the guidance documents are as follows:

- *Delivering inclusive policy*: this helps officials to understand the perspective, needs and priorities of disabled people.

- *Delivering inclusive communications*: this provides tips to improve the inclusivity and accessibility of communications
- *Involving disabled people*: this presents a range of involvement techniques and includes case studies
- *Preparing accessible MS Word documents* and *Delivering technically accessible publications*: these aim to help professionals improve the accessibility of documents
- *Commissioning accessible video*: this outlines features that can make videos more accessible, and how to ensure commissioners get value for money

For further information, visit the **ODI website**

[www.officefordisability.gov.uk/working/news/index.php#book](http://www.officefordisability.gov.uk/working/news/index.php#book)

### **Tfl launches step-free Tube map**

Transport for London (TfL) has produced a map detailing the access provisions at different stations of the London Underground. As well as showing which stations are step-free, there is also guidance on which stations have step-free interchanges and a colour-coded guide indicating the gap or the step between the platform and the train. There is also information on the location of accessible toilets.

To download the map for free, visit the **TfL website**

[www.tfl.gov.uk/gettingaround/14091.aspx](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/gettingaround/14091.aspx)

### **RADAR report: Supporting sustainable careers**

The Royal Association for Disability Rights (RADAR) has published a new report about sustainable employment for disabled people. The report, entitled *Supporting Sustainable Careers: What Disabled People Need to Succeed in Employment* outlines the action that needs to be taken in order for disabled people to get into and stay in work. The report puts forward ten proposals and

shows feedback gained about these from RADAR members. They include the following:

- work contributing to the economy, such as contracts for packing or other tasks for companies, should always pay at least the minimum wage
- disabled people engaged in voluntary work should routinely be offered development support if they want it, to enable them to seek paid work
- employment support and health/social care organisations should always offer disabled people information and opportunities on a range of roles in the open labour market. Disabled people should be able to get support to enable them to take on any role in the open employment market that they have the skills and abilities to do
- disabled people should be offered extra support for keeping a job on the grounds that they are likely to face greater risks of long-term unemployment than other citizens
- disabled people should have the opportunity to manage and control their own support, holding, if they wish, an individual budget for the support they need to work in whatever setting they choose

To download the report, visit the RADAR website

[www.radar.org.uk/radarwebsite](http://www.radar.org.uk/radarwebsite)

### **Equality and Diversity Forum report: Managing competing equality claims**

The Equality and Diversity Forum has published a report named *Managing competing equality claims*, which was written by the pan-equalities organisation brap. The report considers the issue of 'competing equality claims', that is, instances where the 'equalities' claimed by one group or individual threaten, or are perceived to threaten, the equality of others.

The paper explains some fundamental issues involved in competing equality claims and considers:

- the nature of a rights-based equality environment and the ways in which this

- might be fuelling competition and the invoking of rights
- how and why competing equality claims differ from other sorts of conflicts
  - why it is important to resolve competing equality claims and minimise their
  - duration and fall-out
  - the challenges people face in handling such situations.
  - guidance and good practice for employers and service-providers.
  - decision-making in instances of competing equality claims
  - implications for UK public policy

The report finishes by considering the implications for public understanding and awareness campaigns, decision-making, especially in the provision of public services, and longer-term public policy.

To download the report, visit the **EDF website**

[www.edf.org.uk/blog/?p=6925](http://www.edf.org.uk/blog/?p=6925)

### **Call for evidence: Refreshing the national Carers Strategy**

The Minister for Care Services, Paul Burstow, has issued a request for views on the key priorities, supported by evidence of good practice, on what will have the greatest impact on improving carers' lives in the next four years. This is part of the Government's plan to refresh the previous strategy relating to carers, *Carers at the heart of twenty-first century families and communities*.

For further information, visit the **Department of Health website**

<http://tinyurl.com/carers-consultation>

### **Call for evidence: Work Capability Assessment review**

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is conducting a review into the Work Capability Assessment, the medical test which assesses whether claimants are fit for work or whether they should receive the Employment Support Allowance (ESA). This follows figures showing that claims from October 2008 to

November 2009 show that 66 per cent of those tested are deemed 'fit for work', which differs from the 50 per cent estimate initially made by the DWP prior to the introduction of the ESA.

As part of the review, the DWP has launched a call for evidence from organisations and individuals who have information relevant to how the Work Capability Assessment is operating.

The consultation end date is **10 September 2010**.

To provide evidence for this consultation, visit the **DWP website** [www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations)

### **Welfare system reform consultation**

The Department for Work and Pensions has launched a consultation on proposals to reform the welfare system. The aim of the reforms is to increase the incentive to work and to reduce complexity. A White Paper setting out the preferred options will be published in the autumn.

The consultation document sets out three main options for welfare reform:

- a single integrated Universal Credit, which could bring together out-of-work benefits, Tax Credits and payments for needs such as housing costs
- a Single Unified Taper which would ensure that the entirety of someone's benefit entitlement is taken into account when looking at their earnings
- possible changes to the conditionality rules for people getting benefits

The consultation ends on **1 October 2010**.

To respond to the consultation, visit the **DWP website** [www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations/2010/21st-century-welfare](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations/2010/21st-century-welfare)

### **ODI launches Network of Networks consultations**

The Office for Disability Issues (ODI), in collaboration with Equality 2025 and twelve civil society disabled people's organisations, has established a 'Network of Networks' to enable two-way communications between disabled people and government. This will be run as a pilot until March 2011, when it will be run as an independent consultation service. The network is currently consulting on two separate policy areas: independent living and implementation of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The consultation responses will help inform the Independent Living Strategy Group's annual report, as well as the government's response in UN Convention's 2011 report.

For further information, visit the **ODI website**

[www.odi.gov.uk/working/news/index.php#NoN](http://www.odi.gov.uk/working/news/index.php#NoN)

### **European Commission website: information on rights of passengers**

The European Commission has launched a website containing guidance to inform disabled passengers about their rights. This is part of its Your passenger rights at hand campaign, which also saw posters being put up over the summer holidays.

Under EU legislation, disabled people are protected from being discriminated against during reservation and boarding. They are also entitled to receive assistance at airports and onboard aeroplanes. The website holds specific guidance on different modes of transport, as well as covering issues such as luggage.

To view the guidance, visit the **Your passenger rights at hand website**

<http://ec.europa.eu/transport/passenger-rights/index.html>

## **Occupational therapy for people with Parkinson's guidelines**

The College of Occupational Therapists, together with the support and research charity Parkinson's UK, has produced best practice guidelines for occupational therapists working with people with Parkinson's. The publication, *Occupational therapy for people with Parkinson's*, has been created to help occupational therapists develop a deeper understanding of the condition and how therapy can best help patients with Parkinson's.

The guidelines have been developed from available evidence and best practice, and have been informed by the opinions and experiences of people with Parkinson's. The guidelines are structured to facilitate application in clinical practice. They include:

- an overview of Parkinson's, including medical and surgical interventions
- measuring Parkinson's
- the impact of Parkinson's on occupational performance

Four areas highlight best practice guidelines and include specific strategies for initiating and maintaining movement, optimising activities, supporting participation and end-of-life care.

To download the guidelines, visit the **College of Occupational Therapists website**

[www.cot.org.uk/homepage/news/?l=I&ListItemID=2016&ListGroupID=261](http://www.cot.org.uk/homepage/news/?l=I&ListItemID=2016&ListGroupID=261)

## **Report highlights financial issues of families with disabled children**

The charity Contact a Family has published a report highlighting the financial problems of families with disabled children. The report, named *Counting the costs 2010*, is based upon a survey which is a repeat of one undertaken in 2008, asking over 1,100 UK parents caring for a disabled child about their current financial situation.

According to the report:

- almost a quarter of respondents go without heating (23 per cent), an increase from 16 per cent in 2008
- fourteen per cent go without food, a decrease from 16 per cent in 2008
- more than half have borrowed money from family or friends to keep financially afloat or pay for essentials, such as food and heating, an increase from 42 per cent in 2008.
- more than 40 per cent have applied for a charity grant, an increase from 25 per cent in 2008
- almost three quarters (73 per cent) go without days out and leisure time with the family, an increase from 55 per cent in 2008

To view the report, visit the **Contact a Family website**

<http://tinyurl.com/counting-costs-2010>

### **EHRC report – Equally professional: Like minds on different journeys**

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) facilitates the Equally Professional network, which is composed of professional bodies committed to promoting equality and diversity in their memberships. The network has published a report named *Equally professional: Like minds on different journeys*. This sets out the constitution, principles, aims and methods of the Equally Profession network, and sets out initiatives established by the group as well as by individual members. It also looks at what activity is planned for the future.

To download the report, visit the **EHRC website**

[www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/professional-bodies/](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/professional-bodies/)

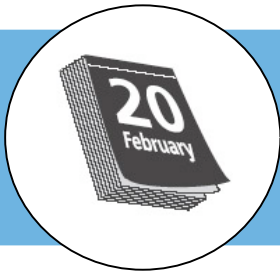
### **Consultation on the change to policy direction for the Big Lottery Fund**

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has released a consultation document seeking views on the proposed wording of a new policy direction for the Big Lottery Fund. This will be taken into account when funding decisions on Lottery grants are made. The Government wishes to reform the National Lottery so that Big Lottery

Fund aims to focus its funding on the voluntary and community sector. The aim would be for the Big Lottery Fund to continue to fund the same types of projects, but with a specific focus of funding on the voluntary and community sector. The intention is that social enterprises and joint ventures between the voluntary and community sector and local authorities would still be eligible for funding.

To respond to the consultation, visit the **DCMS website**

[www.culture.gov.uk/consultations/7313.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/consultations/7313.aspx)



### **CPD events: Designing for dementia and contrast – from 13 September 2010**

The Design Research Centre at Kingston University London is holding a continuing professional development event on 13 September 2010. The day comprises two sessions:

- **Living with dementia: Can design make a difference?**

This talk will feature:

- an exploration of care home design
- an overview of current practice
- buildings, interiors and guidance
- key research

- **Contrast: Accessibility and environments**

This lecture will cover:

- strategies for achieving adequate and creative solutions for contrast in environments
- products which improve accessibility for visually impaired people
- methods of meeting contrast regulations
- practical application and implementation

This lecture covers the built environment core curriculum.

A full-day event will also be held on **14 September 2010** in central London on Contrast: Accessibility and environments. This will include a seminar on accessibility for visually impaired people, a seminar on contrast, and a workshop on developing a strategy and colour scheme.

For further information, email Alessio Corso at Kingston University London [alessiocorso@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alessiocorso@yahoo.co.uk)

### **Workplace Law Introduction to Building Regulations – 14 September 2010**

Workplace Law is holding this training course, which is designed to offer a practical introduction to the Building Regulations, in London on 14 September 2010. The course is aimed at facilities managers, architects, designers, building managers and local authority planning officers. It will cover:

- a detailed look at the Building Regulations and a consideration of what work falls under Building Control
- Approved Documents and relevant British Standards
- how to procure Building Regulation Services
- overlapping legislation such as the Disability Discrimination Act and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order

For further information, visit the **Workplace Law website**

<http://building-regs.workplacelaw.net/introduction-building-regs>

### **Inclusion London Disability in the Equality Act seminar– 23 September 2010**

The disability equality organisation Inclusion London is hosting this half-day seminar, which will take place in central London on 23 September 2010. This seminar provides an opportunity to explore the practical effects of the replacement of the Disability Discrimination Act by the Equality Act. It is aimed at disability and other voluntary organisations and disability and equality officers and will be presented by Caroline Gooding and Natalie Salmon, both formerly with the Disability Rights Commission. Simone Aspis from the Alliance for Inclusive Education (Allfie) will give a guest presentation on education.

The seminar will examine:

- how disability rights will be strengthened by the Equality Act, including the new restrictions on pre-employment health screening and new duties on schools
- how disability will be addressed by the new equality duties
- how disabled people in London can get the most out of the legislation
- what public authorities need to do

For further information, and to book a place, visit the **Inclusion London**

[www.inclusionlondon.co.uk/?location\\_id=14&item=21](http://www.inclusionlondon.co.uk/?location_id=14&item=21)

### **RTPI housing design conference – 28 September 2010**

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) is hosting a one-day conference on housing design on 28 September 2010 in central London. The conference will focus on the quality of housing design. It will consider:

- planning and highways cooperation
- the use of design statements
- the growth of mixed-use developments
- the continuing demand of consumers for specific types of housing

It will also consider how the Homes and Communities Agency is prioritising funding and setting targets and standards for new homes and sustainable communities.

There will be sessions on the following topics, among others:

- Registered Social Landlords and design
- housing standards
- community participation in design
- sustainable urban extensions

For further information, visit the **RTPI website**

[www.rtpi.org.uk/ct/EVENT/1095/11/events/1095](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/ct/EVENT/1095/11/events/1095)

### **ECU higher education Equality Act seminar – 28 September 2010**

The Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) is holding free seminars on the Equality Act, targeted at higher education institutions, in Glasgow on 28 September 2010. The seminars have been developed to prepare institutions for October, when the main sections of the Act are expected to come into effect. The programme has been tailored for human resources and student services professionals and those with responsibility for equality and diversity within higher education institutions.

The programme will provide an overview of the Equality Act 2010, including the current timescales the Scottish Parliament is working towards for the commencement of different provisions of the act, and the general implications for

higher education institutions. During the seminars delegates will be able to discuss best practice, what their institution is already doing in this area and how to develop appropriate responses to the new legislation. There will be a particular focus on employment, service delivery and higher education as these provisions are currently due to commence in October 2010.

Delegates are invited to email any specific questions they may have around the October provisions to ECU before attending the course, to form some of the key discussions on the day.

For further information, visit the **ECU website**

[www.ecu.ac.uk/events/equality-act-2010-seminar-glasgow](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/events/equality-act-2010-seminar-glasgow)

### **Equality and diversity conference – 7 October 2010**

This Inside Government conference, named *Equality and diversity in the twenty-first century: Creating a fairer society* takes place in central London on 7 October 2010. The forum will cover how the Equality Act will work in practice, the impact on different organisations and what can be done to prepare for its implementation. It will offer an opportunity to discuss the ramifications of the Act and hear case studies from practitioners.

The following are among the sessions scheduled:

- **Towards a fairer society**

This session will discuss the key inequality challenges, the new Government's priorities, the business case for equality and the implementation the Equality Act 2010

*Jonathan Rees, Director General, Government Equalities Office*

- **Implementing the equality act: Equality and diversity legislation**

This session will consider the measures in place to enforce the Equality Act, the provision of straightforward, practical guidance, the link between the Equality Act and the Human Rights Act, how to ensure public sector bodies protect the rights of disabled individuals, and how organisations can prepare for the implementation of the Equality Act.

*John Wadham, Group Director, Legal, Equality and Human Rights  
Commission*

- **Equality and diversity in the workforce**

This session will consider whether additional steps are needed to improve access to jobs, the impact of the recession on inequality and the extension of flexible working.

*Sally Brett, Senior Policy Officer, Equality and Employment Rights, Trades  
Union Congress*

- **Health inequalities: Learning lessons from the Marmot Review**

This session will examine the impact inequality has on the NHS, how to promote equality across all diversity strands, the need for workforce training to meet the needs of all service users and how to ensure fair access to NHS services through a joined-up approach.

*Surinder Sharma, National Director for Equality and Human Rights,  
Department of Health and NHS*

For further information, visit the **Inside Government website**

[www.insidegovernment.co.uk/other/equality-society](http://www.insidegovernment.co.uk/other/equality-society)

### **In touch with art 2010 – 13-14 October 2010**

This international conference considers access innovations at museums and heritage sites for visually impaired people, and brings together experts from Europe and North America. Attendees will have an opportunity to learn about new best practice, take part in discussions about contemporary issues, and enrol in study visits to museums and participative workshops in London.

The event will allow time for audience participation in 'Think tank' and Re:Think' sessions, and the programme also presents practical case studies and guidance. Speakers include artists, social workers, philosophers, museum advisers and arts development workers.

For more information and bookings visit the **St Dunstons Events website**

[www.st-dunstons.org.uk/itwa](http://www.st-dunstons.org.uk/itwa)

### **Built Environment Solutions and Technologies (BEST) – 18-20 October 2010**

This built environment exhibition, which replaces the Interbuild Specifier, will take place from 18-20 October 2010 at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham. It will be structured around a series of hubs, each of which will be dedicated to a major construction market and feature dedicated suppliers, and will include a free seminar programme.

For further information, visit the **BEST website**

[www.best-show.co.uk](http://www.best-show.co.uk)

### **A health and social care service for an ageing population – 28 October 2010**

This Inside Government conference, named *Creating a health and social care service fit for an ageing population*, will take place in central London on 28 October 2010. It will provide an opportunity to discuss and examine ways to meet health and social care expectations of an increasingly older population. Representatives from the new Government will also present their adult social reform plans.

Among the topics that will be discussed are the following:

- the future funding of long-term care
- tailoring care and support services to the changing aspirations of older people
- partnership working and a whole system approach
- personal budgets and removing barriers between health and social care funding
- lessons from other countries
- assistive technology
- maintaining independence in housing

For more information, and to book a place, visit the **Inside Government website**

<http://insidegovernment.msgfocus.com/c/13HycuHAq0NfueXAC>

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