

## **Disabled Holiday Information** **Annual Report November 2009-2010**

This year has seen some major changes for the Charity and despite the national economic down turn, we have successfully continued to expand and strengthen our work.

We made a major step towards our long term goals as we were able to employ our first salaried administrator on a six month contract. Equally importantly through the Enablise project, our income has also seen a positive shift away from a totally grant focused base towards self sustainability through commissioned contracts which enable our volunteers to generate funds.

The steady growth of Enablise has strengthened and extended our ties with the local authority and has created new working partnerships with the Fieldfare Trust and Joint Training. The added bonus of this work is that all those involved are engaged in a two way learning process. The DHI volunteers who facilitate also gain a valuable insight into the mechanics of actioning positive physical change to accessibility within a countryside context.

As well as joint facilitating the series of successful disability awareness training days, this year the Charity has also worked with a wide variety of organisations such as the Rough Guide to Accessible Britain, Visit Chester and Cheshire, Shropshire Wildlife Trust and Bayston Hill Parish Council.

We published the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of our attractions and accommodation guide for Shropshire early in the year which was well received and is proving popular.

We have attended and held various awareness events including Warrington Disability Awareness Day and several 'Children with Disabilities' Information Day's. These are always a vital part of our work as they enable interaction with the users of our information and to take on board their feedback.

We have continued to extend our work with accommodation and attraction providers and have provided accessibility advice for a diverse variety of venues including a fishery, several museums and a selection of hotels and self catering establishments. Promoting examples of best practice in providing inclusion for all visitors remains a key objective.

We have again been involved in the judging process for Access for All awards at local and regional levels and our links with other accessibility and disability related organisations have continued to be strengthened.

In addition to extending our very successful, UK wide, accommodation, attractions and activities searches we have introduced a new search for trails. One of the main focuses of our work during 2010 was supporting our volunteers to populate these with accurate data and updating our regional pages. There are now almost 800 countrywide listings on our database, the majority of which have been assessed by on-site visits.

With the assistance of our new administrator our news and events web pages are now being populated regularly, making our website more current and relevant. Unfortunately the system for disability related organisations to add their own information did not prove popular.

During this year our website visitor statistics have continued to grow and now average over 1,000 per day and we have received excellent feedback on its content, clarity and ease of navigation. This included the following comment from a young lady who is a wheelchair user and also has severe visual impairment. 'What an amazing website! I was so pleased to find your website it offers a great facility to disabled people. Normally going on holiday is very difficult but with your website you answer all the questions a disabled person may ask and/or be concerned about..... Thank you for building such an important site.'

As our work continues to expand and develop, our focus for the coming year will be to ensure our steadily growing numbers of volunteers are enabled to achieve measurable results for their input, both for their own sense of self worth and to inspire other people to extend their life experience. The success of DHI is a tribute to their continued support and commitment of the Charity's aims.

In conclusion the work of the Charity has continued to be extended and improved throughout 2010 and although, because of the present state of the economic climate, 2011 will bring extra challenges we will look forward to the coming year when in addition to expanding the Enable Project, completion of the updates and self sustainability will be our main goals.