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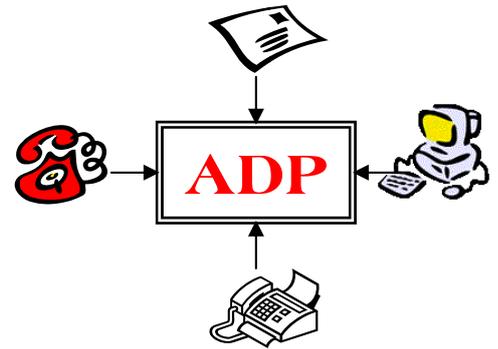
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## Annual Report 2009

### Contact with the ADP

In 2009, we were expecting a significant drop in numbers of enquiries from last year's outstanding achievements, due to the fact that our Development Officer (who works for 25 hours per week) took a three month sabbatical from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September.



However, this does not appear to have impacted very much on the annual number of enquiries, as in 2009, the ADP handled 6036 enquiries in total which again is excellent and represents excellent value for money. We believe that the vast number of enquiries in November and December resulted from our nomination and subsequent success in winning the RADAR People of the Year Awards for "Doing Careers Differently" (more information about this follows later in the Annual Report).

The ADP is and remains a professional organisation of and for disabled people to provide information, advice and support on all career issues, as well as support to the many disabled people who consider entrepreneurship as a valuable alternative to overcome barriers to employment. Again, this year has highlighted a very broad spectrum of issues and widely felt needs. The ADP provides free advice and support to each enquiry and we have successfully demonstrated that many of the publicly held perceptions of disabled people are inappropriate. With suitable accessible information and support, disabled people are effectively contributing to society and

becoming or remaining economically active through employment or self employment.

As well as the appendix, showing more detailed examples of the types of enquiries and the support given, a brief overview of the enquiries received has been broken down to show the months in which they were received, as well as the nature of the enquirers' requests. The table of enquiries follows:

	Jan to Mar	Apr to June	Jul to Sep	Oct to Dec
Individuals	747	785	101	1084
Organisations	696	624	107	836
Membership and Administration	352	210	109	385

The answerphone only service continues to be effective, although in peak periods, the answerphone has become full. Generally, regular checking, notation and deletion of messages ensures that callers are able to leave a message, although there have been a few occasions when unfortunately enquiries have not been left as the answerphone has been full. The low numbers shown above in the period July to September reflect the fact that our Development Officer was on sabbatical from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010 and the telephone helpline was operated from 10am until 1pm on Mondays and Thursdays only during this period. During this time, email enquiries were forwarded to the Chair and Executive Committee, but the enquiry figures for July, August and September were significantly reduced.

We continue to receive many general requests for advice and information about disclosure of impairments, career options and job hunting tips. Additionally, we have had numerous enquiries in relation to benefits and work and the impact of the Employment and Support Allowance and changes to Incapacity Benefit. Again, it has been noted that many individuals contacted us for advice in relation to employment or self employment and any potential

impact upon disability related benefits and potential contributions towards personal support through the Direct Payments or Independent Living Funds, with many people believing that they would lose their Disability Living Allowance if they were to take up employment. This further highlights the issue that few disabled people are receiving the correct information about work related benefits, despite repeated contact with other agencies and many disabled people are still fearful of being financially "worse off" if they consider employment/self employment.

We have also, as always, received a number of enquiries about the Access to Work Programme and have supported employed and self employed individuals through every stage of the process, from informing them of the Programme and providing contact information, through to the provision of support to challenge an inappropriate decision. We have thus ensured that many disabled people are able to access the programme to begin or maintain employment with the appropriate levels of equipment and personal support. We have also established links with the Access to Work Programme on a regional and national level in order that we can provide experiential evidence in order to improve the service.

Requests for information about challenging poor employment practices and potential discrimination by employers remain at inappropriately high levels. It would appear from our enquiries that disabled people are not receiving the appropriate information or support that they need in order that they can pursue employment and that those people who develop impairments in an employed position are being inappropriately informed that they will no longer be able to maintain their employment. Additionally, issues have been raised by several enquirers with regard to lack of access to resources (such as sign language interpreters, accessible training venues and practices, accessible training materials and information, etc.) in order that they are able to progress within their organisation. These enquiries suggest that disabled people are still significantly disadvantaged in the workplace.

Our work with disabled people who want to run their own business is also prolific. We continue to provide comprehensive information and support to very many disabled people in the process of setting up and maintaining a business and have further distributed our Resource Guide Pack, "Setting up in business? A Resource Guide for disabled people and their advisors", along

with the accompanying Directory of Support, to individuals, statutory and voluntary organisations, social work departments, hospitals, educational establishments and business support agencies. However, it is still noted that our enquirers have generally contacted various business support agencies, before making contact with the ADP and are not receiving the information or practical support that they need to move forward. After contact with ourselves, they appear to move forward successfully and to be better equipped to set up and develop profitable enterprises. Indeed, in light of the numerous comments made to us by disabled entrepreneurs, we have written to Lord Mandelson to highlight the many issues that disabled people face when they approach some Business Link providers.

Once again this year we have been contacted by a diverse range of organisations with wide ranging requests for information or support. Many organisations of disabled people, impairment specific organisations, statutory authorities, educational establishments, private sector companies, media consultants, voluntary sector organisations, organisations who offer support into employment and various consultants working on behalf of organisations have contacted the ADP. Requests for information included support on employment or educational issues; support with diversity policies; support with staff training; questionnaire or interview responses; policy and practice guidance; requests for the ADP to be represented at events, on various committees or strategic boards and media requests for ADP's input. We have also received invitations to join consortiums and meet with European agencies working on employment opportunities for disabled people. However, as our priority has to be the work we carry out in the UK, and with our limited resources, we have been unable to pursue further partnerships in Europe. Nonetheless, ADP was able to meet with the Shanghai Disabled People's Federation in London and talk about some of the strategies that we use to support disabled people into work.

The ADP is a member of the Council of Disability Rights in Europe United Kingdom CDREUK. In May, the ADP went to the Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the European Disability Forum (EDF) in Athens. The European Union is developing a workplan for the period 2011 -2020. EDF developed a list of items disabled people wanted in the EU workplan called the Disability Pact. The ADP pointed out that the document omitted the option of self

employment which was subsequently included. Each country is lobbying their government to adopt it.

Additionally, as well as our work with organisations, we receive numerous requests to advertise jobs and non executive vacancies and have continued to provide this information through our email distribution list, as well as to advertise positions on our website. This service will continue as advertisements on the website create a small revenue for the ADP and enables our members to receive details of vacancies.

In relation to government departments, ADP has contributed to work on the Enforcement Policy, Guidance about Compliance and Regulatory Framework of the Care Quality Commission; has attended a number of conferences and forums in relation to disabled people and work; has contributed to research in relation to self employment for a number of Regional Development Agencies and the management of occupational pensions for disabled employers; has contributed to the accessibility of various websites; and has supported the National Policing Improvement Agency, Connexions Service and HMRC to ensure that their services are accessible to disabled people.

The ADP continues to pursue core and project funding. We were able to continue to use the contribution of £30,000 from the John Ellerman Foundation, received last year, towards the Development Officer's salary. However, other bids to grant providers have not been successful, although a bid to the Reaching Communities Programme has been rewritten in order that a potentially more successful outcome will follow in 2010. £1000 was received from the Austen and Hope Pilkington Trust for the update and printing of the Setting Up in Business guide. We have also been able to pursue the pro-bona consultancy obtained from NCVO to enable us to improve this situation and continue to pursue alternative means of funding to sustain the organisation. Copies of our annual accounts are available from the office upon request.

## **Communication**



We have continued to strive to use electronic means of communication between the Executive Committee, staff, the membership, network groups

and the public in order to minimise the operational costs of the ADP. Additionally, where possible, we have maintained the use of email distribution lists for our membership information, in order to minimise postage costs, without compromising access for those members who do not have email.

Again, the website has been updated as often as possible, although there have not always been adequate resources (in terms of time) to ensure that the jobs section is updated on a weekly basis.

The Committee has continued to explore alternative ways of meeting to avoid the travel costs and expense of hiring a room, but there is still a need for face to face meetings to ensure that the access needs of all participants are met.

Additionally, the ADP has contributed to articles in Disability Now and The Independent with regard to entrepreneurship, career progression and the employment of disabled people.

## **Disabled Entrepreneurs' Network**



The work of the Disabled Entrepreneurs' Network (DEN) has been abundant. Enquiries are still being dealt with by the Chair, the Executive Committee and the Development Officer.

We have been highlighted in a number of documents and consultations as a good practice case study for the support of disabled entrepreneurs and are featured in reports with regard to supporting disabled people wishing to set up in business published by the East Midlands Development Agency. Additionally, we were able to provide support to the East of England Development Agency in their Business Support Strategy.

The ADP was also represented at the Information Technologists' Livery Company's Accessibility Debate on issues in relation to technology and disabled entrepreneurs.

We have also been involved in a consultative capacity with various Business Links, support organisations for disabled entrepreneurs and have maintained our relationship with Business Link London.

## **RADAR Award**



We are delighted to announce that the Association of Disabled Professionals were the winners of RADAR's People of the Year Human Rights Awards for "Doing Careers Differently".

The Doing Careers Differently Award 2009 recognises the ADP's commitment to supporting disabled people to achieve their full potential with regards to employment and self employment.

The glittering Awards Ceremony was held on 30th November 2009 at Battersea Evolution and was attended by Jane Hunt, the Chair of the organisation, Kath Sutherland, Development Officer and Kirsty Sutherland-Cash, the Personal Assistant to the Development Officer.

Jane Hunt who collected the Award from Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, said: "This is a tribute to the ADP Executive, staff and members who have served us so well. We also acknowledge the contributions made by Sir Peter Large and Sue Maynard-Campbell, who must be remembered as they were deeply involved."

Kath Sutherland, Development Officer, commented: "The Award is recognition of the many years of hard work and support provided by the ADP to ensure that disabled people are acknowledged for the many skills that they have. We hope that we are able to secure funding to continue our work in the future, as we receive thousands of enquiries every year but have very limited funding. The Award reflects our dedication to provide a practical, common sense approach to enable the very many disabled people who contact us to gain and retain employment commensurate to their abilities or to choose self employment as a viable option if they wish to do so."

Liz Sayce, Chief Executive of RADAR, said: "The Association of Disabled Professionals has for many years been at the forefront of efforts to ensure that disabled people progress and develop careers, rather than being

marginalised by a laser-like focus on work, any work, at all costs. Such an approach wastes talent and is ultimately counterproductive; challenging it is crucial to 'Future Proofing Equality', and the Association of Disabled Professionals are truly deserving winners of this Award."

A video of the Awards Ceremony is available at [www.radar.org.uk/awards-2010/the-event.aspx](http://www.radar.org.uk/awards-2010/the-event.aspx)

## **Business Link in London**



We have continued to work with Business Link in London throughout 2009 providing consultancy with regard to a content review of the Business Link in London website (particularly the Enable site dedicated to disabled people wanting to establish a business, the Women's site and Startquest business ideas). Additionally, we provided support at a number of workshops and events, including one for people with learning difficulties entitled "Running your own business".

## **International Enterprise Promotion Convention**



We were represented at the Inaugural International Enterprise Promotion Convention, held in November at the Harrogate International Centre, by our Development Officer, Kath Sutherland.

The Convention attracted over 500 delegates, including around 100 from overseas representing 35 different countries. The delegates included practitioners, academics and policy makers in small business support, enterprise education and training.

More than 150 presentations were given on best practice and innovation in the creation and support of small businesses world-wide. Kath made a presentation about ADP's work on supporting disabled people into self employment and this was very well received.

According to the evaluation report, the speakers at this Convention formulated six key conclusions and recommendations which could make a significant difference to increasing participation in entrepreneurial activity:

**1. Improve the enabling environment.** Evidence from the World Bank suggests that those countries which do the most to streamline red tape and eliminate regulatory burdens see the greatest impact on economic growth - by thinking carefully before they introduce regulations and, when it is essential to regulate, doing so in a way that minimises the additional burden on business.

**2. Create more innovative entrepreneurial businesses.** In the US most technology-based businesses emerged from research institutes and large company research labs where bored and stifled researchers and middle managers realised that the only way to 'do their own thing' was to resign and find a "garage".

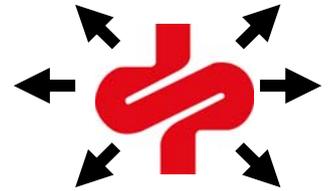
**3. Provide better Business Support.** Whilst academics argue about the benefits of business training and support, research by Barclays Bank and the National Federation of Enterprise Agencies suggests that it does make an important difference - but we need to ensure that advice is timely, appropriate and accurate.

**4. Promote Innovation in Business Support.** Business advisers report that they make regular efforts to evaluate their own support programmes and to learn about the success of programmes run by others, yet curiously report that they perceive insufficient innovation in business support. We need to do more to promote innovation, perhaps by creating a challenge fund that can be tapped by business support organisations. We need to promote more effective learning and sharing of lessons from practitioners from all round the world, through websites and conferences.

**5. Promote enterprise in Schools.** We need to do more to promote enterprise in schools - so that education releases and nurtures our natural entrepreneurial talent rather than beating it out of us.

**6. Stop the stealth taxes on businesses.** All too often, they add to the paperwork, and despite the government's apparent belief that this is an easy way to raise revenue, all those taxes in the end work their way through to the prices paid by the customers, whilst often also making British businesses less competitive than their foreign counterparts.

## Links



The ADP has established and maintained numerous links with many government departments including the Department of Health, Department of Works and Pensions, the Office for Disability Issues, the Department of Business, Industry and Skills, as well as with the various Regional Development Agencies around the country. We also sustain and expand upon our collaboration with various disability related and impairment specific organisations, job brokers, employment agencies, educational establishments, information technology access organisations, as well as with the media.

We have continued to contribute to the equalities work of the HMRC, many Regional Development Agencies and various statutory organisations, including the Care Quality Commission. We have been involved with numerous committees to comment on several Equality Impact Assessments and the Independent Living Strategy.

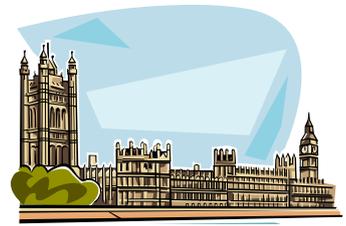
The work of the ADP sustains and preserves the core aims of the organisation to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people in employment, education and daily living issues.

## Membership Rates



The ADP has again maintained the level of membership fees for 2010, at the previous year's rates, as follows:

Full Membership Fee	£ 20.00
Sustaining Membership Fee	£ 25.00
Student Membership and Reduced Fee	£ 10.00
Overseas Membership Fee	£ 25.00



## Parliamentary

A summary of parliamentary activities follows:

### **DWP Green Paper “Shaping the Future of Care Together”**

The ADP contributed to this Green Paper on Social Care, highlighting a total opposition to the abolition of disability benefits. We pointed out that this action would be totally inappropriate on the grounds that disabled people have had to pay for the extra costs of disability that differ fundamentally from the costs of growing old and infirm, as although the latter costs have a significant impact, they are of a different magnitude and therefore have to be addressed a different way.

Secondly, ADP protested strongly that disabled people know far better than social workers where the priorities lie and what to do to get the best out of all the resources available. We also acknowledged the personalisation agenda but highlighted the associated costs and the fact that an unhealthy power relationship would result.

Thirdly, we pointed out that we could not see how in practice any policy of this sort could work in the present circumstances of cuts in staff. Even if the appropriate levels of resources were made available to the social services departments of local authorities, then they would have to be accountable for them, have targets and all the bureaucracies that follow on from that. Therefore, there is little, or indeed no, chance of the full value of the money being accorded to those who were in receipt of it previously.

In addition to being totally opposed to the abolition of Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance and other disability benefits relating to care as the government did not specify what the term “disability benefits” meant, we believed that the government had failed to consult and urged them to fully review the proposals.

## **EHRC Consultation on the EU Article 13 Equal Treatment directive.**

The ADP was invited to contribute to this consultation with regard to goods and services in the four remaining grounds not already covered by EU law - age, sexual orientation, religion or belief and disability. This directive would ensure equal treatment across the four strands (age, sexual orientation, religion or belief and disability) in the areas of social protection, including social security and health care; education; and access to and supply of goods and services which are commercially available to the public, including housing and transport. This applies to both public authorities and private sector bodies providing goods and services.

We supported the proposals for legislation with regard to harassment and discrimination and highlighted the need for additional resources to be allocated in order that the infrastructure, as well as transport vehicles and communications, could be Equality Impact Assessed across all six protected grounds. We also supported the directive to potentially expand upon the duty to make reasonable adjustments with regard to housing and transport.



### **Closing Remark**

The year ended on a high with the RADAR Award. It is a remarkable achievement that we have been able to accomplish this level of work despite a limited service for 3 months. Again, as in previous years, this would not have been achieved without the dedication and excellence of our staff, Kath and Kirsty, who work extremely hard to answer all the enquiries. The Board of Trustees would like to extend our sincere thanks to them.

Jane E Hunt  
On behalf of the Board

## Appendix

### Examples of issues supported by the ADP

#### **Employment**

##### Case Study 1:

We were contacted by a school librarian with postgraduate qualifications who was working full-time during term time. However, as she had developed a physical impairment which left her unable to balance and walk unaided, she was finding it particularly difficult to access the first floor library, as there was not a lift in the building where she worked.

Although she had purchased a power assisted chair to use on the ground floor, there was still the issue with regard to her climbing the main staircase to the library and she was concerned that her work would be significantly affected.

We were able to advise the lady about the Access to Work programme and to provide support with regard to potential reasonable adjustments that could be made to enable the lady to continue working.

##### Case Study 2:

We were contacted by a disabled teacher who had a number of impairments relating to Type 1 diabetes and had subsequently had prolonged periods of depression. He was desperately seeking support in order that he could move from Incapacity Benefit to a part time paid position to assist him to "improve his situation and self esteem".

We were able to provide support and information with regard to his options and discussed ways of writing his applications in order that he was promoting himself in the most appropriate manner to be successful. We were also able to advise of the permitted work rules and return to work benefits for which he could apply. After many telephone calls and email exchanges, the gentleman successfully gained a part time job in a teaching union and has moved from Incapacity Benefit to Working Tax Credit.

He commented:

"Thank you so much for taking the time and trouble ( I know you'll say" it isn't!") to work with me and give me the information I wanted... it has helped more than you'll ever know. I now have a clearer idea of how I stand and have hope for my future. Thanks so much again (although this hardly seems adequate!)."

## **Self employment**

### Case Study 1:

We were approached by a retired merchant navy captain who had been attempting to establish an accessible cruise ship company for several years, in order to come off long term Incapacity Benefit. The client was referred to a number of brokers over a long period of time (over 5 years), but despite having received information that he had a strong case to receive capital and grant funding (as he was establishing a social enterprise), he was unable to complete the necessary business plan information required due to physical restrictions resulting from a stroke.

The gentleman concerned had been persistent and consistently stated that he was unable to use a pc due to lack of access technology and his physical restrictions. He therefore had to gain physical support from family members to type up sections of the business plan over the 5 years in order to meet up with the various brokers and funders over this time with the appropriate information.

However, each meeting resulted in further delays until a member of his family became available to assist with the inclusion of further information to his working document and he was unable to move from long term benefits to self employment due to these delays. Additionally, he had been misinformed on a number of occasions with regard to his benefits and available support as a disabled entrepreneur.

He stumbled across the ADP and DEN websites and within two weeks of making contact, and receiving the appropriate information and support, including physically typing in what he wanted to include, he was able to draw

up a business plan that enabled him to gain the necessary funding (over 5 million pounds) to take the venture forward.

Additionally, we were able to provide support for the gentleman to work (using the permitted work rules) and receive Access to Work funding for a support worker and essential impairment related equipment. He is now employed by the social enterprise and has indeed also employed 2 senior members of staff and a support worker to assist him with the venture. He anticipates that he will be able to purchase the ship, adapt it and advertise for the 130 members of staff needed for the venture in the next twelve months.

### Case study 2:

We were copied into an email to a business support agency in the North West by a lady who was a sole trader. She was successfully operating her business, but needed to employ someone, as she was turning away work.

She emailed the business support agency (with support from a friend) to request a meeting with the assistance of a sign language interpreter as she was "struggling to understand" the information on the website as British Sign Language was her first language.

When the lady sent the email, she was told that as she had previously received support, the funding had ended for start up phases and that she would no longer be eligible for support.

Additionally, despite informing the business support agency of her difficulties in accessing the English Language, she was sent an attachment in pdf format with regard to employing people and offered the opportunity to discuss via type talk (again a text based service). She further explained that this was inappropriate and stated that if communication must be done without the use of an interpreter she would prefer this to be using email as she has assistance with English from her friend.

She was at this point told to contact the ADP to assist her with this issue as "they assist business professionals such as yourself."

ADP then contacted the business support agency and questioned the reasons why the lady was not entitled to support with the assistance of a sign language interpreter.

With our intervention, this issue has now been resolved and the lady has received the information she needs through sign language interpretation from a Business Link broker and HMRC.

## **Organisations supported by the ADP**

### Connexions Service:

We were contacted by a Connexions advisor in West England to provide assistance to a young disabled woman who wanted to take a gap year before attending University. Although the young woman was very academically able, she needed further support with regard to building her self confidence and support to acknowledge and communicate her needs, as well as to ensure that her needs were met.

We were able to provide support to the advisor, and indeed to the young disabled woman, in order that she could gain the confidence that she needed to make informed choices about her future career. Additionally, as the contact has been established with this Connexions Service, we have been able to contribute to further aspects of ensuring that the needs of young disabled people approaching the service are met on a local and national level.

### IT Livery Company (WCIT):

We have worked with the IT Livery Company on the accessibility of technology and its impact on disabled entrepreneurs. The ADP was able to publicise a survey on the barriers faced by disabled entrepreneurs and to promote the potential of a free mentoring scheme offered by members of the company. We were also able to attend and contribute to the Accessibility Debate and continue to maintain links with the organisation, as a means to accessing and supporting disabled entrepreneurs.

### Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC):

The ADP has continued to work with HMRC on a number of issues, including:

- Issues faced by disabled people with learning difficulties when they apply for Working Tax Credit

- the placement of the accessibility button and the use of plain language and accessible documents on the HMRC website
- provision of support and advice, along with other third sector organisations, on their Disability Strategy. This work is continuing into 2010 and our Chair is a member of the Disabled Customers Consultation Group;
- attendance at their Business Advice Days, where the ADP held an Exhibition Stand and provided support to disabled entrepreneurs and organisations seeking information on increasing employment for disabled people; and
- the identification of issues and difficulties relating to the operation of the Simplified Deductions Scheme.