

**NOTES OF THE
DISABILITY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING HELD AT CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL,
53 HEREFORD STREET, GROUND FLOOR, ON Tuesday 21 July 2015 at 10 am**

Present: Doreen McCoard (Post-Polio), Allison Nichols-Dunsmuir (Health in All Policies, CDHB), Simon Atkinson (People First), Anna Mitchell (Disabled Persons Association) and Robert Watts (Older Persons)

Apologies: Gail Payne (Metropolitan Community Advisor, Disability Portfolio, CCC), Adele Wilkinson (Mental Health Education and Resource Centre) and Tracey Dorreen (Deaf/Blind Community)

Facilitator: Allison Nichols-Dunsmuir

Updates

Group members attended a recent CERA meeting on psychosocial recovery, which included CERA updates and small group discussions re the Well Being survey, communicating with people with disability, and future of the red zone.

Members also attended the CCDU forum put on by DPA.

DAG noted the Arts Access Awards to Isaac Theatre Royal, with congratulations. Also the M Butterfly performance that was audio interpreted went well.

Bus exchange – accessibility positives discussed. We need to watch carefully regarding drop off, pick up and mobility parking provisions which will be available once the full site is completed.

Also concerns about the decreased usage of buses by people with disabilities resulting from the route changes that (reportedly) mean more people have to change buses.

Advocacy by CDHB to increase the minimum height of car parking buildings, to accommodate disability vans and wheelchairs carried on car roofs, continues.

Issues to be followed up:

Provisions for people with disabilities being picked up and dropped off outside the CCC Hereford Street building.

Possibly raise the issue of getting people onto networks and email lists, even if they are not members of the organisation involved. For example, there are good newsletters by IHC and CCS Disability Action, emails from DPA, Ministry of Health DSS newsletters.

Action on free left turn and pedestrian's safety, and magnifying readers in libraries.

Ideas for revitalising DAG for the regeneration of Christchurch:

- Promote within the CCC the availability of DAG to advise
- More engagement with CCC staff – commitment by staff to listen, be flexible, and take DAG advice
- More understanding by CCC staff of the disabled population profile (further develop/update materials for this)
- Would like to see CCC building project plans when still undergoing 'internal' consultation. This would enable feedback, not necessarily of a technical nature (i.e. Barrier Free NZ Trust would give that), but to raise general disability issues. Might include site visits.
- Would like to have input into priority setting for asset and management plans for ongoing maintenance and repairs.
- Might there be a place for DAG to acknowledge/celebrate positives?

Guest Speaker:

Barrier Free NZ Trust, Lorraine Guthrie, CEO and Jason Strawbridge, Technical Manager

The Trust works in four main areas: education, technical advice and guidance, consulting, advocating. Believe that accessibility is a human right.

Trained 300 Council staff in NZ last year.

Developing 'guidance documents' e.g. Recreation facilities with Sport NZ, starting work on outdoor spaces and wellbeing.

Consulting role strong within CCDU.

Advocating for mandatory access audits beyond the Anchor Projects.

Very involved in EDLG, an advocacy group.

Advocating via submissions e.g. Earthquake Prone Buildings Bill

Audit reports very professional, identify compliance vs best practice, and make recommendations

Want access reports to have the same status as Fire Reports during the consents process.

Involved in access aspects of the national review of the Building Act and Code – now 14 years old and lots has changed.

Bus exchange – successfully advocated for 4 toilets all accessible, vs 2 that were in original plans.

Noted that legal requirements for visual impairments are limited in the current Code or 4121, but Blind Foundation has good guidance documents e.g. signage, streets

Action:

Discuss whether DAG would advocate to Council that access audits become mandatory

Discuss whether DAG can discuss with CCC Building Control Team how access audits fit with the Partnership Approval Model being developed now

Next Meeting: Tuesday 18 August 2015 at 10 am at Christchurch City Council, 53 Hereford Street