



March 2008

Welcome to the March Newsletter for the Barrier Free NZ Trust. We have a range of topics to discuss in this issue and we hope that you join our forum to take the discussion further.

This month we will cover:

- A Barrier Free Training Pathways update, including a brief introduction on the assessment of modules and what the Auckland City Councils Building Policy Manager Bob de Leur thinks of this new service.
- Concerns about the ratios of accessible carparks with an ageing population.
- How the Department of Building and Housing intend to contribute towards the goals of the NZ Disability Strategy.
- The Disability MAY Day Expo in Wanganui.
- The 2008 Disability Information Training Expo.
- Waterfront Rock 'N Roll in Wellington this month.

We hope that this year has been ticking along smoothly for our readers as it has been here at Barrier Free NZ so far!

Barrier Free Training Pathways Update

We had positive feedback from the launch of our new Training Pathways Modules of Learning that was held at the Latimer Hotel in Christchurch on 19-20 February 2008.

A new service that our training department is offering as part of the Training Pathways Programme, is the Assessment of Modules. Now you have the option to be assessed individually on "Experiencing the Accessible Journey," "Law, Access and the Accessible Journey," "Designing the Accessible Journey," and "Assessment of the Accessible Journey."

Bob de Leur, Auckland City Council Building Policy Manager confirmed his support for the modules of learning and assessments at a recent meeting with our Chairperson Jim Bowler. This service can be used as a measure to check whether your staff has achieved the desired learning outcomes. Bob stated that this provided a quality assurance that enhanced Auckland City Council's accreditation policy.

Enquire within your own organisation to see how these assessments can be of value to you in your line of work.

Accessible Car Park Ratios

The Christchurch City Council Disability Advisory Group raised the concern that with an ageing population and potentially more people with mobility impairments, there would be an increase in demand for accessible parking.

These spots are already difficult to find in town and if there is enough support for this movement, it could potentially be addressed to the DBH for discussion. [Join our forum](#) and tell us your opinion.

Government and Access

Government agencies are required to submit plans to the Office for Disability Issues for their implementation on the NZ Disability Strategy. The overall goal of the Strategy is to advance NZ towards being a society that is fully inclusive of people with disabilities. To contribute towards this goal, the Department of Building and Housing (DBH) is committed to work to achieve the following outcome:

That the people of NZ have access to quality homes and buildings that meet their needs, reflect our environment and contribute to a sustainable NZ.

The 'Implementation Plans 2007' are available online which outline the various departments' work plans and progress reports towards achieving the goals of the Strategy. [Click here](#) to access these documents.

As 2008 is an election year and these issues are important, we urge all New Zealanders to strive forward to achieve a barrier free environment by using every opportunity available to draw these accessibility goals to the attention of all candidates.

Disability May Affect You (MAY) Day

Whanganui Disability Resources Centre (WDRC) is once again hosting their 6th annual Disability MAY Day disability expo on Saturday 10 May 2008 at the Memorial Hall, Wanganui. This event promotes the work that various organisations do to support people with a disability, and reduce physical barriers in our society, in order to increase the participation of people with disabilities.

In conjunction with MAY Day, there will be two disability forums which are planned to be used to initiate the development of a community disability strategy. The first forum will consider "Access to Community for Disabled People" living in Wanganui, Rangitikei and Ruapehu regions. In the afternoon the topic will be "Education and Transitioning" where the move by students with disabilities from secondary school into the community and work will be considered.

These issues may affect some people in some way at some time and the WDRC are keen to get as many people as possible to take part in these forums so that your views can be known and the community can begin to draft a disability strategy.

While the Barrier Free NZ goal of accessibility for all is not solely disability focused (ie: push chairs can create accessibility issues) it supports MAY Day and will be hosting a stand on the day. We encourage you to come along and support this move to help remove physical barriers that potentially affect all people in our community. For more information please contact the Whanganui Disability Resource Centre on 06-347-1176 or email wdr@whanganuidrc.org.nz.

2008 Disability Information Training Conference

This 2 day conference is a must for anyone providing disability information, with a full programme of excellent speakers who will give you tools and tips to take away and put to good use in your organisation. This event is being held in Queenstown on the 12-13 May 2008, [click here](#) for further information.

One of the sessions is about 'blogging' and those attending will be shown how to create a blog for their organisation. Blogs are an effective means of communication and a way

of keeping up to date with current issues affecting the community. Some interesting websites are [DRC Queenstown](#), [NZ Federation of Disability Information Centres](#) and [Walking is Overrated](#).

Waterfront Walk 'N Roll

The Wellington City Council City Communities have organised a promotional walk for people of all disabilities called 'Waterfront Walk 'N Roll'. The event will take place on Wednesday 26th March from 1pm – 2pm, meeting at Civic Square. There is no registration fee so take a break from your day and head down to join the fun!

For more information please contact Fabian Todd on 021 227 8291.