

## DISABILITY REFERENCE GROUP (DRG)

### MINUTES

5.30 PM  
Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2008

#### Committee Room 2

#### Members

Kendall Akhurst (Co-Chair)  
Rosie Macleod  
Sandie Waddell  
Sara Pivac Alexander

Alan Royal  
Lisette Wesseling  
Philippa McDonald

#### Guests

Alexia Pickering  
Raewyn Baldwin

#### 1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed the group.

#### 2. Apologies

Thomas Bryan  
Jules Taniwha

#### 3. **Raewyn Baldwin, E-Communities (W.C.C)**

Raewyn presented the E-Communities portfolio to the DRG. The Wellington City Council made a budget for E-Communities three years ago. The focus of E-Communities is to develop 'Online Communities'.

City Housing have helped encourage computer use with Raewyn's involvement in 'E-Rooms'. Raewyn is also involved the 'Wellington Loop' project which will allow Secondary Schools, Students and Teachers open access to online resources. As current internet speeds stand at best around 20mb's up/down the Loop project would like to see schools have a 1GB up/down connection. In relation to the Loop project Raewyn also is involved in the 'Tech Hui'. The 'Tech Hui' is focused around youth and allows them to voice their opinions to local, and National Government as well as local secondary schools. A big part of the Tech Hui is to provide examples of students using technology to develop their education. An example of how technology helps students can be seen in presentations by blind students from Wellington secondary schools.

Raewyn is also involved with Cathy Olhson from an Internet Technology firm called 'Squiz'. 'Squiz' are well known for developing ways of working with students that have impairment. The latest project is focused on making an accessible interactive online map of Wellington CBD and relevant services e.g. ATM's, Car Parks, Lifts, Venues, and Facilities e.t.c. for sight, hearing and physically impaired persons. Users will also have the ability to 'tag' and make comments of particular areas. Raewyn plans to work with Ross Livingstone and a DRG sub group to help develop the W.C.C website into a fully accessible website.

#### **4. Alexia Pickering, "Access Options" for Accommodation**

Alexia presented to the DRG on Accessible Accommodation, Law and Compliance. Alexia plans to insure that all accommodation that displays the I.S.A abides to legislation. Part of her ongoing auditing is to raise awareness to those facilities which don't comply yet advertise the I.S.A. For example 'City Life' hotels had said they were accessible and were found out not to be.

Alexia has created a data base for publication (digital and print) focusing on "What are the requirements?" All facilities newly built or newly renovated must abide by the 4121 building code standards of access. Although the building code had pointed out access issues relating to wheelchair users the code does not take into account vision and hearing impaired. "Deaf people have difficulty knowing when someone is at their door." One in ten units have to be accessible. Alexia pointed out that Vision and Hearing impaired communities need to push to make areas accessible for them. These then need to be included in the building code.

Alexia has developed an accessibility checklist for accommodation providers in the hope that they can truly call themselves 'accessible'. Areas that still need more recommendations and advice on are Internet Connections, Heating, Bedding and Windows.

The DRG will be presenting Alexia's Accessible Accommodation Questionnaire at the 2008 Accessible Tourism Forum.

#### **5. Other Business**

- a) Transport and Website 'Sub Groups' need to forward any updated information to the co-chairs.
- b) Courtenay place upgraded area - consultation with relevant groups. The upgrade work has started.
- c) Bill Wrightson was asked to audit the area as a wheelchair user.

- d) Any liquor ban issues need to be forwarded to Iona Pannett.
- e) Sandwich boards – pricing going up

## 6. Report back from Members

### 1) Kendall –

Rosie, Ross, Helen Young and Kendall trialed the accessible Wellington 'Go Bus'. The bus was spacious for wheelchair users, and easy to see out of. Thomas will check colour contrast for the vision impaired.

### 2) Ross –

- a) Sandra Rodder will present a talk on Accommodation, at a lunch on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April. The DRG members are invited.
- b) Accessible Tourism Forum 11<sup>th</sup> of April
- c) Abseiling with Back-Up New Zealand on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April in the Civic Square.

### 3) Sandie –

- a) Presentation from Lifetime Design at the New Dowse. Housing designed to accommodate persons during the aging process i.e. from baby to 100 years old. Two storied housing available with a lift option when needed. Housing is not necessarily accessible but has the ability to become accessible. Minister of Social Development, Minister of ACC, Kapiti Mayor and the Upper Hutt Mayor were present at the talk.
- b) Possibility to have Life Design to present to the DRG.
- c) [www.lifetimedesign.org.nz](http://www.lifetimedesign.org.nz)

## 7. Confirmation of Minutes

- 8. The meeting closed at 7.30pm and the next meeting was confirmed for Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008.

ITEM	ACTION REQUIRED	RESPONSIBLE	DUE	COMPLETED
Annual Plan	E-mail particular areas of focus	Kendall		
Accessible Questionnaire	Send out the questionnaire for review	Ross		
Accessible Questionnaire	E-mail comments to Alexia	DRG Members		

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