

# Live link tips from TV star Edmonds



● Val Homson welfare benefits advisor with IT trainer Frank Carrington, manager Tony Lewis with secretary Alice Evans at West Lancashire Disability Helpline Code OKKANA110305Z

● Noel Edmonds offers advice on long distance conferencing to the team at Sandy Lane in a live video link-up Code OKKANA110305Y



## Paving the way for disabled rights

By EMMA CRUCES

**NOEL Edmonds is paving the way for the disabled to attend tribunals through live video links.**

The former Telly Addicts star provided tips for staff at West Lancashire's Disability Helpline as part of a long distance video conference.

The Sandy Lane-based service purchased the new technology after a funding windfall of £279,909 from the Big Lottery Fund.

It will be used to assist disabled clients who need to attend benefits tribunals in Liverpool.

Noel Edmonds, who now heads a video conferencing company, said: "The benefits are endless.

"We installed the very first video link between a crown court and the NSPCC so that children would not have to give evidence in person.

"Most groups meet face to face which is unnecessary and the extra travel is

irresponsible and bad for the environment.

"The biggest problem is getting people to change this behaviour."

Tony Lewis at West Lancashire's Disability Helpline said: "Our research shows 93% of our clients would have preferred to use a video link than attend their tribunal.

"Many of these people are seriously ill and this will be an enormous help to them."

Welfare benefits advisor Val Homson added: "Many of our clients can't make it to the appeals service in Liverpool.

"This way is easier and cheaper. Whether the client has mental health problems or has trouble getting around, they have developed a relationship with us.

"They would much rather come here than travel to Liverpool."