

Newsletter issue 96 -March 2025

Forward

Midlothian

Disabled People

www.forwardmid.org.uk

Forward

Mid

Equality - Diversity - Inclusion



A Tribute To Jeff Adamson 1957 - 2025



In honour of Jeff Adamson Chair of Forward Mid. 2005-2025

We are so deeply saddened at the death of our much loved friend, comrade and inspirational chair Jeff Adamson.

Jeff was Chair of Forward Mid for 20 years. A force of energy and a remarkable human being. Jeff's deep, ethical commitment to the rights of disabled people to live a full life, to fulfill human rights for all and a profound devotion to the social model of disability as a way of understanding the world, was woven into his essential character.

Jeff was an inspiration to so many people. He lived with real integrity, purpose and meaning. He

brought much humor, spirit and energy for change into the world and gave so generously to all those who knew him.

Jeff embodied such a generosity of spirit, humility, kindness, courage and forward vision, always journeying towards what is a good life for a Disabled person, to the collective effort of Forward Mid and all that we were involved in together.

Always inspiring, motivating, teaching, energising.

Jeff will be very sadly missed, yet we endeavour to honour his uniqueness and unwavering, ethical commitment to his work around equalities for all and full human rights,.That was so essential to his way of being in the world.

Jeff fought tirelessly with great energy, for disabled people's rights to an independent and dignified life in the communities of their choice.

Forward Mid have lost a leading light within its close membership, yet remain committed in honour of a much loved dear friend and colleague to continue his essential work.

Thankyou Jeff. We are so very grateful for the gift of having known you.

The Forward Mid Team

I first met Jeff around 2005 at a meeting we were invited to attend to discuss the possibility of starting a group for Disabled People residing in Midlothian.

We were interested in starting a group which looked services and resources available. Although the group was to be supportive, we determined that it was to be more than offering 'tea and sympathy'.

We wanted to ensure that Disabled People's lived experience would be reflected in all aspects of service development and delivery. We also knew there was a role to play as a source of information to people with physical disabilities.

This is what made Jeff, and I become colleagues and friends. To say he was a character would be an understatement. He had a dry and wicked sense of humour.

He enjoyed tormenting me, which was reciprocate. However, he was so much more than that. Jeff was an inspiration, and he just got on with life , never allowing his disability to get in the way of his determination to improve the lives and services available to Disabled People.

Jeff has been involved in many groups including those who met to challenge the Scottish Parliament on decisions regarding Personal Care for younger Disabled People, the employment Personal Care Assistants for those under 65 which he and others argued should be free, became known as Scotland Against the Care Tax, an issue he fought tirelessly about.

He, Elizabeth and I enjoyed meals together and the news that Jeff had died was such a shock. I can't imagine Forward Mid without his enthusiasm and ability to challenge those who think they know what Disabled People need or require.

His underlying skills for stirring things up with were renowned.

I will miss his expertise and friendship immensely.

Marlene Gill

Jeff, what a guy.

I was one of the lucky ones that got to know Jeff and listen to all his stories. He loved the finer things in life, a nice dinner, a good Gin and a wee bet on the horses.

He showed me anything was possible regardless of the barriers that he faced and that showed what a strong man he was.

When I went to visit Jeff at his home Ted, my dog would sit in Jeff's chair every time. I'd tell him to get down but 2 minutes later he was back there waiting to be told by Jeff to get down.

I will miss Jeff, and I cherish all the good memories I have and he holds a special place in my heart.

Sheree Muir

I met Jeff when I started volunteering with Forward Mid. My first and long-lasting impression of him was a gentle giant, a protector and a friend. He just gave off this safe vibe that made you feel comfortable in his presence. He was friendly and knowledgeable, but he didn't push you and could be soft spoken. Despite this he commanded respect, and everyone would listen. He wasn't afraid to share his opinion and I learnt a lot just by listening. He also had a sharp wit and would often fence with Ian with word play and jokes and make us all laugh. He often seemed to have an answer for everything whether sensible or not and he loved a flutter. I was hoping he would give me some pointers as an amateur and he a seasoned expert but sadly that didn't happen. I was too shy and busy to ask.

Tamzin McDonald

I first met Jeff at the inaugural meeting of Midlothian's physical disability Disabled Group in the John Chant centre in Penicuik in 2005, at this time the name had not been chosen. Needless say the name I suggested was ignored.

From this humble start Jeff became the cheese and I became to chalk and so an ongoing joke had started with Jeff's strange taste in Hats and Horses (Musselburgh Racetrack) Opting to take the Chairman role of the newly named Forward Mid Group. A thankless task. It meant endless meetings. I am happy behind the scenes.

Jeff had a special set of leadership qualities and a very good oratory voice. We made a good team never taking anything for granted, always prepared to listen to the others opinion. Seeing it through other people's eyes and understanding what they are going through is a big ask of anyone, for we all have our own struggles.

Where ever you are Jeff know you will be sorely missed.

Iain Tait



MIDLOTHIAN DISABLED PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

DIRECTORY LAUNCH 2025

Join us at our Assembly, where you can learn about services, support, and resources that support a good life for all disabled people and people with long term conditions in Midlothian.

WEDNESDAY 16th APRIL 11.30-13.30



ST JOHN'S & KING'S PARK CHURCH

**31 Eskbank Road, Dalkeith, Midlothian, EH22 1HJ
(opposite Morrisons)**

Pop in, have a browse of our information stalls, and collect your free copy of the newly updated Directory for Disabled People and People with Long-Term Conditions.

There will be staff and representatives from various organisations that can assist you to achieve the kind of life you want to live.

You can drop in on the day, but if you can let us know your coming, please do – it helps with organisation and catering!

Find out more: info@mvacvs.org.uk www.forwardmid.org.uk

More Roles for Rolls!

“More Roles for Rolls!” - a ‘Sharon’s World Project’, Artlink Edinburgh and Midlothian

I joined Sharon for a mini exhibition by Sharon Melrose In the beacon Gorebridge, a Midlothian-based designer who has developed a card campaign after frustration from wheelchair access and the lack of representation of wheelchair users in film and media.



This led her to develop her campaign ‘More Roles for Rolls’, highlighting the need for adequate access in the public realm and representation in media. Sharon has contacted celebrities ranging from The Stereophonics to Barbie Movie Director, Greta Gerwig.

Sharon is staged a mini, mobile, touring exhibition to showcase her wheelchair user advocacy campaign. This is the chance for you to pick up some cards, see Sharon’s work and meet Sharon herself!

“I am really excited to show my work and can’t wait for this to happen. I have seen exhibitions but I haven’t done one myself. I want people to enjoy looking at my designs but most importantly to remember the message”

Sharon Melrose (b. 1985), is a Midlothian-based designer who has had her work featured in Dundee’s V&A Museum (t-shirt designs to accompany ‘Night Fever: Designing Club Culture’ Sharon is a prolific card maker and has an online blog showcasing her designs and making skills.

She runs ‘Sharon’s World’ which includes the campaigns ‘More Roles for Rolls’, ‘Sharon’s Techno T-Shirts, and ‘Sharon Says’ that aims to spread positivity and put wheelchair users needs into the public eye.

Artlink Edinburgh and the Lothians has a 40 year history of removing barriers to participation, supporting innovation in the arts in collaboration with disabled people and the systems that support them.



Drop In



Free of Charge
Linking Loanhead
At

Loanhead Library

- **Wednesday 26/02/25 - 14.00hrs to 16.00hrs,**
- **Wednesday 12/03/25 - 14.00hrs to 16.00hrs,**
- **Wednesday 26/03/25 - 14.00hrs to 16.00hrs,**

CAFÉ CONNECT

Dalkeith Arts Centre

- **Thurs 06/03/25 - 2.00 to 3.30pm**
- **Thurs 03/04/25 - 2.00 to 3.30pm**

All Welcome
- Inclusive for
everyone.

We focus on what
can do not what
they can't do.
Plan together.

Meet or make
friends and share a
blether, take part
in a quiz or board
games.
Find out what's
available with LAC.

Link in with Local Area
Co-ordination, Enable
Communities, Based on a
vision of a society where
disabled people are valued
as full and equal members
of the community



Spinal Injuries Scotland

Spinal Injuries Scotland (SIS) has existed for over 60 years since its initial inception as the Scottish Paraplegic Association in 1960. Later its name changed to the Scottish Spinal Cord Injury Association (SSCIA), as its focus developed from purely sport into dealing with other aspects of living with the injury.

In 1994 the SSCIA became SIS and since then our focus has been primarily education, advice and support for people with a spinal cord injury, their family, friends and those that care for them. No medical advice is given and any issues in this field are referred back to the medical profession.

In recent years the organisation has gone from strength to strength and reacted to its changing role within the wider community of people with Spinal Cord Injury in Scotland.

Our remit has widened and we now have a presence at outreach clinics held by the QENSIU, at outpatient clinics across Scotland, as well as having a regular input to the inpatients in Glasgow.

Spinal Injuries Scotland is a charity that wants to make a difference in society. We are ambitious to achieve positive change so that people with a spinal cord injury can live their daily lives in a more equal environment. Our Vision and Mission Statement looks towards a more inclusive society. To create a society without barriers, giving opportunity for all people regardless of their disability status. We have a clear stated vision to act and an 'agent of change' and a mission statement which details the specific areas in which we seek to achieve that change.

Our Vision



Spinal Injuries Scotland's vision is to:

- Act as an agent of positive change for all spinal cord injured people (SCI)

Mission Statement

- Backing you for life, removing barriers and promoting equality of choice, control, dignity and freedom for our SCI community in all areas of life in all parts of Scotland

Values

- We will use our enthusiasm, energy and resources to encourage our members to concentrate on the future and support them to achieve their goals.
- We are committed to tackling exclusion by promoting understanding and inclusion on behalf of our members.
- We will promote respect and integrity for our members through our plans, words and actions.

Strategic Approach

Spinal Injuries Scotland advances its charitable aims by channelling its efforts via the following three strands:

Support those coming to terms with a SCI

Inform those living with SCI

Influence decision makers and designers as they shape the world for those with SCI

SIS delivers a nationwide, membership-focused service, which is delivered via programmes and projects designed to best meet the needs of our members. Those who experience a Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) have undergone a life-changing and traumatic event, rehabilitation is immensely challenging from both a physical and emotional perspective.

✉ : info@spinalinjurliesscotland.org.uk

☎ : +44 (0)800 0132 305

🌐 : www.spinalinjurliesscotland.org.uk



Soar like birds... Disability gliding at its best!

Walking on Air is a super-friendly Scottish Registered Charity, dedicated to making gliding accessible to people of almost all disabilities and ages.

More formally, our charitable objectives are:

To further the physical and mental health of disabled persons to relieve their suffering and distress, to aid them in their handicaps and to aid their personal development and encourage their independence by the provision of recreational and leisure facilities and specifically by promoting and encouraging their participation in gliding and instructing them in aspects of glider aviation (including instructions in flight, meteorology, aviation law and procedure) with a view to improving their conditions of life.



🌐 : <https://walkingonair.org.uk/>

Alternative Publications

Please like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/forwardmid/

Forward Mid newsletters are available in large print on request from Eric Johnstone ☎ : 0131-663-9471 or ✉ eric.johnstone@mvacvs.org.uk write to him at MVA, 4-6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith, EH22 1AE with your request. Electronic copies can be found on www.forwardmid.org.uk. The latest Firefox browser has the reader symbol 📖 in the address bar, click and select narrate from left menu. The latest Safari Browser has the reader symbol **Reader** but does not read aloud. These only work on websites without errors. If you require help please contact Forward Mid and we will arrange to help you.

Edited by Iain Tait for Forward Mid