

**Forward**

**Midlothian**

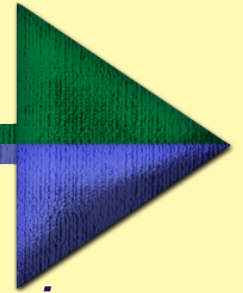
**Disabled People**

[www.forwardmid.org.uk](http://www.forwardmid.org.uk)

**Forward**

**Mid**

**Equality - Diversity - Inclusion**



## **Midlothian Disabled People's Assembly**

The first meeting of Midlothian Disabled Peoples Assembly for 2022, "Supporting and resourcing a good life for disabled people living in Midlothian", took place on Wednesday, September 21 at St John's and Kings Park Church Dalkeith.

This was a gathering of disabled people, carers, representatives from organisations that support disabled people, Health and Social Care professionals, local councillors, and MSP's, coming together, talking to each other, and making contacts (professional and social). All had the opportunity to become better informed about services that support disabled people and the resources across Midlothian that could help all disabled people and people with long-term conditions lead the kind of life they want to.

Around twenty guest stakeholders were present including;

- Dean May – Fair Start Scotland, Triage Central Limited. Employment support.
- Becky Brotherstone, Madeleine Bell, Diane Wilkie, Sustrans Project Officer. Active Travel Strategy, Midlothian.
- Allan Blair - Sport & Leisure Wellbeing Manager Sport & Leisure Services. Midlothian Council.
- Dalkeith and District Citizens Advice

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Bureau.

- Olivia Sklenar - Lothian buses Accessibility Officer.
- Juliet Ridgway Tait – Braw Blether/ Living with It.
- Pauline Skea - Specsavers. Home visits.
- Lorraine McNab – Unpaid carers worker -Red Cross/ VOCAL.
- David Walker, Carol Sleight, VOCAL Midlothian.
- Elizabeth Campbell. Service Development Manager. HCL. Handicabs.
- Mike Harrison. Midlothian Access Panel.
- Naomi Knights – Connect Befriending, Volunteer Midlothian.
- Una Paterson – Connect Online, volunteer Midlothian.
- Magda Clark – Volunteer Development Officer.
- Stuart McIntosh and Local Area co-ordination team, Enable Scotland.
- Mark Wells - Food Fact Friends.
- Lyn Pornaro/ Paula Moncrieff – Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living.
- Alan Russell Disability Employment Advisor. Department of Work & Pensions.
- Kasha Jarosz Affordable Warmth Team. Change works.
- Alison Dunwell, Midlothian libraries, promoting “Near Me”, video consultation service allowing people to virtually attend appointments.



The event was attended by approximately 150 people between 1130 and 130. Everyone present was able to collect their own copy of the new 2022/23 Directory for Disabled People and People with Long-Term conditions. The directory was in keen demand. Additional copies are now available from libraries and the Midlothian Voluntary Action office in Dalkeith.

People present on the day, commented on the energy and buzz in the hall due in no small part to the large number of conversations between people who would normally not have the opportunity to meet or speak to.

Thanks to all who came and participated in this hugely successful event, making it a lively, enjoyable and enlightening gathering.

The directory is also available electronically and PDF version of the following link from the Forward Mid website. [www.forwardmid.org.uk/print](http://www.forwardmid.org.uk/print) [www.forwardmid.org.uk/mobile](http://www.forwardmid.org.uk/mobile)

# Electric Cars & Accessibility

## What Drivers with Disabilities Need to Know

As Autotrader discovered, charging an EV can be one of the most challenging aspects of ownership when you drive with a disability. Let's take a closer look at exactly why that is, the support you can receive, and advice on what's being done to resolve the issue.

### Accessibility barriers at charging points

There are a number of key barriers for people at charging points. Some of the biggest problems for drivers with a disability include:

#### The charging process

Reaching, using and handling the actual charge point itself has been cited as a real problem for a lot of drivers. Many find it heavy to hold, and find it a challenge to locate assistance when they need it. A **recent survey** reported that 41% of people found moving the charging cable to be difficult. 54% also said lifting the cable from the boot was a challenge.



#### The environment itself

Having space to comfortably move around both in and out of the car is already a key requirement for drivers with a disability. Many find that EV charging zones can be quite hard to access, most often owing to the absence of dropped kerb access and a flat parking area with level access.

#### The general lack of accessibility

Unbelievably, there is just one fully accessible charging point in the UK, representing 0.003% of all those available. Currently, only 25% of drivers with a disability feel comfortable driving an EV. If changes were made to the infrastructure of the charging system, that number would rise to 61%.

Iain Tait from Forward Mid, as a wheelchair user myself, I have found the infrastructure lacking, In Midlothian the only EV charging points I can access are inside railway stations, however they are always busy. It would be a worthwhile exercise on test drive to check at least six EV charging points.

Thanks to Michael Morris  
Digital Relations Consultant

**6XDMEDIA**

#### Motability

[news.motability.co.uk/everyday-tips/plan-long-journeys-electric-car/](https://news.motability.co.uk/everyday-tips/plan-long-journeys-electric-car/)

#### Autotrader

[www.autotrader.co.uk/cars/electric/ev-drivers-with-disabilities/](https://www.autotrader.co.uk/cars/electric/ev-drivers-with-disabilities/)



## DR Inclusive Fitness

Dale Robertson from DR Inclusive Fitness, Dale studied sports coaching and has worked with disabled people for over 15 years. During his studies Dale came across a disabled student who was a wheelchair user that didn't take part in any sport lessons.

### What was the solution to this?

The student wanted to be part of the lesson. The answer they adapted the class so the student could be part of the class, from this realised that in this instance she wasn't prevented from taking part because of her disability it was due to a lack of knowledge and support.

From here Dale worked as a PA for a disabled gentleman then went to setting up his own business which established in 2018.



Fast forward to 2021 and Dale decided to set up a gym which specialised in personal training and massage therapy for disabled people. Sheree Muir decided to visit Dale and his Gym DR Inclusive fitness. Which is based in Loanhead. Sheree stated "You need to travel by car to get there. The unit is a nice space and a good energy with plenty of space and adapted equipment."

Once we got talking about his services and what he offers I found that I felt very comfortable with Dale and the confidence to give the equipment a try. For a person with a disability and a wheelchair user I know 100% that I would never go back to my old gym. For a start the equipment is not adaptable for my needs and it's a confidence thing, I would feel very aware of everyone around me.

Dale offers a wide range of services and its catered around each persons need. There is adapted fitness classes on through the week, if you like to be part of a group to exercise. The classes are small groups so that way everyone that comes along is comfortable and Dale and David can work with everyone in the session.

If you prefer 1:1 this is also an option and Dale would work with you to set out a personal fitness plan that focuses on range of movement and functional strength and looking at what you can do in the gym that can make daily living tasks a bit easier such as transfers and pain management.

Other services is sports massage and extensive rehabilitation. This side of fitness is very important also and the plan could mean doing a rehab programme that would include sports massage and cupping along side exercise. There is different treatments available. Dale shared with me about a client that suffered a stroke and rehab was key to get the client back into a position that was liveable with movement, mobility and independence. As soon the client was able to get back to the gym they started a rehab programme. Working on movement and gaining strength and mobility. By the time the client appointment arrived for hospital physio the client was six weeks in from stroke and at a different part of his rehab that he had gotten to. If the client had waited the six weeks this would have been very different and the key to rehab is early intervention to prevent prolonged time which could lead to poor recovery.

Dale has worked with a variety of disabled people and people with long term health conditions. His knowledge about individual needs and how they will work in different ways. This way having a personalised plan to your own individual needs and goals to work that is set I would say give it a try or go see for yourself and meet Dale who will make you feel very at ease. If you feel this is not for you then Dale can also do home visits and set out a routine fitness plan for home.

With everything that has happened in the last two years with Lockdown and Covid, I feel its time to try live life as best as you can. Maybe making that scary move to try something different, its worth

a try and with the gym that is set up for people in our community with different needs, what do you have to lose???

I know I'm going to give it one try and I know my limit with a Chronic illness, but pushing myself that little bit could lead to bigger bits!!

DR Inclusive Fitness, 10/2 Eldin Industrial Estate, Loanhead, EH20 9QX

☎ 07923335331

✉ [info@drinclusivefitness.co.uk](mailto:info@drinclusivefitness.co.uk)

📷 [www.instagram.com/drinclusivefitness/](https://www.instagram.com/drinclusivefitness/)

📘 [www.facebook.com/drinclusivefitness](https://www.facebook.com/drinclusivefitness)

**Sheree Muir**

## **Café Connect**

Café Connect has been on our minds for a while now. following on from success of the assembly in September, we have secured the following dates in **Dalkeith Art Centre**:

- Thursday 06/10/22 – 2pm to 4pm
- Thursday 10/11/22 – 2pm to 4pm
- Thursday 01/12/22 – 2pm to 4pm
- Thursday 02/02/23 – 2pm to 4pm
- Thursday 02/03/23 – 2pm to 4pm

Local Area Coordinator are happy to provide the tea/coffee etc.



Catherine Acton

Local Area Coordinator

Unit 1B, McSence Business Enterprise Park Dalkeith Midlothian EH225TA

☎ 0131 454 1785 Mobile: ☎ 07889 456 267

🌐 [www.enable.org.uk](http://www.enable.org.uk)



## **Sheree's Story**

St James Quarter Visit

New beginnings I decided. The pandemic hit us all. Being isolated in my house for nearly two years I became scared of going out for many different reasons and I had to basically start my life again and build my confidence of the world out there. Home had become my safe bubble but also a prison.

This is just my personal story and I know that everyone will have there own covid story to tell.

With time I have done my best to build my confidence with the outside world. One of my goals was to go into Edinburgh and I had heard a lot of positive comments about St James Quarter and I love fashion so 'why not'

One of my fellow Forward Mid friends decided to get the bus in and go visit for a look around. When we arrived it was a Wednesday morning and it was quiet. The shopping centre had a nice feel to it! Very wheelchair friendly going around the walkways with lots of space. Also plenty of lifts and toilets and lots of sign posting.

The quarter offers a Guest Mobility Service that is free of charge. A fleet of mobility equipment – Scooters, powered wheelchairs, manual wheelchairs, tri walkers, rollators and pushchairs.

Iain is the manager at the mobility services and Iain and his staff are very passionate about the quarter including staff – retailers -shops and being more educated about wheelchair users and people with disabilities and how they navigate around the Quarter. Most mobility aides can get around the Quarter and fit in to the lifts very easy. I found going around certain shops I did have some issues with clothes rails and I did knock over a rail in one of the clothes shops. Overall I managed around most shops but there was a few that was tight in between the aisles and put me off going in again. With the help of Ian and his staff and the Guest Service team they are willing to hear people's views and concerns and learn from this and to endeavour to make your visit enjoyable and go above and beyond for each visitor.



Other parts of the service they offer:-

- Help with planning your route around the quarter.
- Getting in touch before your visit and ask questions about your visit or if you require anything.
- The mall ambassadors – are able to navigate your visit and help with any enquires you have.
- Mobility services can offer to meet you off the bus, train or in the carpark. This could be good if its your first visit and you are unsure. (We did this and it was really helpful)
- If you are coming by car or taxi and getting dropped off in the carpark you will have up to 20 Minutes with no charge.
- The staff are First Aid and Mental Health trained.
- The quarter is dog friendly and there is water bowls throughout. Can also hire dog buggies which are allowed in most shops.
- There is a option to charge your own wheelchair if needed and use one from the fleet they have while your wheelchair charges.
- All staff are fully trained and knowledgeable on all of the mobility equipment and you can have a practice before you use any.
- Can do group bookings

From visiting and meeting the staff they made me feel like nothing was a issue and showing me they wanted to make Mobility Services to point and taking on any suggestions I made. This showed their commitment to having disabled people visit the quarter and making it enjoyable.

I would recommend visiting the quarter. If you can plan your visit beforehand so you have a plan. Arrange car parking and if you want to hire equipment you can book online or phone and do this in advance.

Morning through the week seems quieter and if its your first time I would suggest this.

There are various restaurants and a food court Plus the Everyman Cinema so lots to choose from. I had a really nice visit, I felt the quarter had a nice vibe and I enjoyed looking around the shops and it was nice to do something normal and be part again of the outside world that I missed for the last two years.

My last point is the lifts, it's a experience itself and I will leave the surprise for you to experience – it's a ride!!!

Book online at least 24 hours -  [@stjamesquarter](https://www.instagram.com/stjamesquarter) or ☎ 0131 290 1117

The Mobility Service is on level B2.

Monday – Saturday 09:00 hrs – 19.00 hrs

Sunday 10:00 hrs – 18.00 hrs.

Guest Services

Desk is on level 1

 [guestservices@stjamesquarter.com](mailto:guestservices@stjamesquarter.com)

☎ 0131 290 1118

Welcome me is a App. that quarter uses.


## Health and Social Care in Midlothian

The Midlothian Integration Joint Board (IJB) is the public body that governs the work of Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP). HSCP's consist of the NHS and local council, and are responsible for adult social care, adult primary health care and unscheduled adult hospital care, as well as several other local services.



**Midlothian  
Health & Social Care  
Partnership**

Every two months, Midlothian's IJB meets to discuss issues related to the governance of the HSCP. The Board includes a non-voting member from the Third Sector Interfaces (TSI) who is there to represent the views and interests of the third sector in Midlothian.

Our TSI representative is keen to hear your thoughts on current issues related to health and social care in Midlothian, as she may be able to raise questions on your behalf at the IJB. Papers for the Board are released on a Thursday, one week before the IJB meeting. If you want to receive, read, or discuss the papers with the TSI representative, email  [miriam@volunteermidlothian.org.uk](mailto:miriam@volunteermidlothian.org.uk)

Also, if you have any other concerns related to the provision of health and social care in Midlothian - as an employee, a volunteer, or a member of the local community - please get in touch for a chat. If email doesn't suit, you can also call the TSI office on ☎ 0131 663 9471.

## Lived Experience Experts Panel

The Lived Experience Experts Panel is a group of people who will help to design the NCS by taking part in different kinds of research and design activities.

This means taking part in things like:

- A survey
- Being interviewed
- Helping us come up with ideas about what changes we might make
- Helping us understand what our evidence is telling us
- Helping us understand if the suggestions made will bring about the changes needed within health and social care that people have asked for.



You can decide whether or not you want to join in with any of the research and design activities you are contacted about. The panel will be made up of people who have real experience of using or providing social care support in Scotland. Your expertise will help shape the future NCS..

You can apply online [Lived Experience Experts Panel](#). If you need help to fill in your application, Freephone ☎ 0808 196 1507



# Petanque Piste

Hello, My name is Sandy Howden and in the past 10 months I have raised money and steered through the building of a Petanque Piste in Newtongrange Welfare Park.

It is now up and running and is available for everyone to participate. It is free to play and you can play nearly all year round. There is a ramp for disabled People to safely enter the Piste and 4 benches around the Piste to sit and watch if you would rather do that.

Boules are not expensive and they can range from £23 to £35 for 8 Boules. The more expensive Boules are used in competitive games but these Boules on Ebay and Amazon will do for starting. You can play singles, doubles or trebles and the first team to reach 13 wins the game. All will be revealed in the tuition. It is a lovely park and a great setting to come along and relax and meet other people or watch all the activity.

There is a set time of playing \ practicing boules for the Newtongrange Petanque Club and that is Tues\Thurs 2pm till 5pm. Anybody can come along also to play. It is a Piste open to all, members and non members. Its free also. The club meets on a Saturday morning also from 10am till 1pm. It is fluid . You can participate for an hour if you want.

There will be tuition available also to get anyone started. They do not all need to participate as there are 4 benches for people to sit. I can if you want hand in a set of boules for your group.

I raised lots of sets in the community and have handed them into groups around the community. Let me know.

Hope to see you there.



Thank You.

Sandy Howden  
☎ 01875 820752.



## Alternative Publications

Please like us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/forwardmid/](http://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](mailto: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](http://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  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**