

FORWARD MIDLOTHIAN DISABLED



Local Area Co-ordinator

FORWARD MID would like to welcome Martine Robertson a local area co-ordinator, who joined us at the January meeting. She has brought with her a wealth of knowledge that we will be able to put use to, also she will be able to use **FORWARD MID** to further her aims, this joint venture will benefit both parties.

The local area co-ordinators office is situated in Woodburn, Dalkeith, and work throughout Midlothian, you can contact them on 0131 561 9657

Martine Robertson has been asked to provide information to **FORWARD MID** to give an insight of the services that they provide, this will be included in the next issue of the newsletter.

If anyone has information that **FORWARD MID** could use please contact Eric Johnstone 0131 663 9471 or Iain Tait e-mail dulce.tait@tiscali.co.uk

Disability Rights Commission

The Disability Rights Commission are asking people for their views on the definition of disability.

On There web site at www.drc-gb.org you can download a questionnaire that allows you to have your say and you send it back freepost, if you are interested in taking part in this survey then the questionnaire has to be back to the disability rights commission by the February 28 2006.

They are asking if we wish the way the Disability Discrimination act 1995 should be changed and what to, this is to try and make it easier for employers to understand the law associated with employing disabled people.

FORWARD MID members are participating in this survey

Launch of the FORWARD MID newsletter

Councillor Jim Muirhead of Midlothian Council graciously agreed to launch the **FORWARD MID** newsletter at the MVA office in Dalkeith, present with councillor Jim Muirhead are Marlene Gill, Eric Johnstone and editor Iain Tait. This was a good opportunity to talk personally with Councillor Jim Muirhead about some of the issues that **FORWARD MID** are looking into and I am pleased to report that of three questions that Councillor Muirhead took away with him we received a satisfactory reply. Also at this meeting Councillor Muirhead invited **FORWARD MID** to be a member on the equalities forum, as Marlene Gill has already had dealings with Midlothian council she offered to take up this position.

News Disability Rights commission

A short film released 10th November aims to encourage workers to 'come out' about their long term health condition so they can continue to work effectively.

The film – The Appointment - follows the journey of Alan, a hotel manager as he finds out he has diabetes. In the film, Alan is forced to think about how he needs to adjust his life, and whether others he employs at his hotel could be facing similar issues. The Appointment also aims to dispel the myth that disability is just about wheelchairs and white sticks.

The film, made by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC), will give details on where to get help and advice about managing a disability in the workplace. Bert Massie, Chairman of the Disability Rights Commission, said: "I'm very proud of this film. It helps dispel the myths about whether disabled people can work and banishes some of the stereotypes. "I hope it will help people feel more confident about disclosing their condition. And that it will teach employers that many people in their workplace probably have some sort of health condition."

The Appointment was screened in Vue cinemas across the country. It is also available on DVD from the DRC Helpline. 08457 622 633. For those with internet access the DRC web address is www.drc-gb.org/newSroom

Forward mid has a copy for members to borrow contact Eric Johnstone 663 9471



Safelink

What is safelink?

Safelink is an emergency scheme that informs the emergency services of medical conditions, drugs and personal information.

Why Safelink?

I am married but my wife does not know all my drugs and quantities, also I might be by myself and unable to communicate,

How does it work?

A bottle contains two information sheets to be completed by yourself about your ailments, doctor, next of kin and personal information and updated by yourself. It is kept in the fridge, Safelink stickers are then placed on the fridge and on the bottle and two further stickers are placed somewhere conspicuous. So if you need to go into hospital there is information on your medical condition.

How much does it cost?

Midlothian council provide this service **free**, these bottles can be obtained from libraries and leisure centres. Please use this service and feel **safe**

Restaruant Review

Christmas lunch was held in the **Scotch Bonnet** in Dalkeith. Although there are two steps at the door the restaurant has a portable ramp and the interior has been well thought out for access to the toilet is floor level and the toilets themselves were very clean. We were well attended to and although we were three wheelchair users it didn't restrict the area around the table. The food for a Christmas lunch was all fresh and very tasty and was enjoyed by everyone. As this is our first time at grading as a group we have decided to grade it in two categories access to the property and have graded it 6 out of 10 and the food and service which we grade at 8 out of 10.

Thank you **Scotch Bonnet**

Profile Of a Member



Name Eric Johnstone
Age 21 plus VAT
Position Development Officer

My hope is to bring clear focus and direction to the work of MCCF and Forward Mid, to strengthen their membership and support these groups towards real achievement. Perhaps most importantly, to listen to what individual people want the Forums to do / achieve.

My role is to support and develop Forward Mid in Midlothian, this is a group of individuals with a focus on issues of equality and equal rights for individuals affected by physical disability.

A.S.C.

A second chance, is a new shop on Dalkeith high Street, directly opposite Woolworths selling goods to help the lives of disabled persons. On my visit I found them very informative and the shop has everything laid out for easy access. It was nice to see one on the high street rather than tucked away in some industrial estate. So if you have some spare time please go in and say hello and tell them you seen it in the Forward MID newsletter.

Aromatherapy and Reflexology

Aromatherapy and reflexology are now being offered at the Strathesk Medical Group. At a cost. This complimentary medicine is delivered by a fully qualified team

Aromatherapy uses essential oils that are inhaled to influence the moods and feelings of individuals. Reflexology is a holistic therapy where pressure is applied to feet and hands that correspond to the internal organs of the body.

These treatments are aimed at alleviating stress, headaches, insomnia, hormone imbalance, musculoskeletal problems, Fatigue, respiratory problems and digestive problems

When starting you are consulted about your health and emotional well being before treatment commences.

Costs range from £15.00 to £30.00 for further information please phone 0131 537 9977 gift vouchers are also available.

If anyone does attend then please contact Iain Tait at dulce.tait@tiscali.co.uk with their comments

Apologies

I have to apologies to all the people who wish to attend the meeting of FORWARD MID as I gave you all the dates but omitted the time that the meeting fell on. All the meeting of forward mid will take place between 2.00PM and 4.00PM any one who wishes to attend will be made most welcome.

Anyone wishing to attend but does not like to go along unattended please Eric Johnstone on 663-9471 and ask him to contact them and one of the members will come and introduce themselves and arrange details with you to be picked up and escorted to and from the meeting. If this appeals to you then the next meetings are on Thursday the 9th of February and the one after is on Thursday the 9th of March 2006. Please use this offer.

Disability Equality Duty

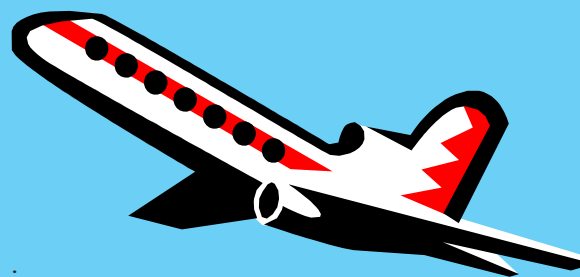
“The disability Equality Duty is a new way for the public authorities to tackle disability discrimination in a practical way by introducing policies that actively promote opportunities and so prevent discrimination taking place. By taking an organisation-wide approach you can achieve tangible outcomes and improvements for disabled people. It will need the personal commitment from the top of your organisation and will make a real, positive change to your employees and service users.”

Bert Massie - DRC Chairman.

For more on what this means for employers and individuals and for up to date information on Disability issues visit the Disability rights commission website - www.drc.org.uk

Planning A Holiday

Planning a holiday can be very stressful even if your not disabled, But we all like a break away from the normal. But where are disabled find out than when they arrive there are steps to negotiate even when the brochure says that there are none. Marlene Gill has brought A brochure to our attention and donated it to the FORWARD MID information library, this brochure is called Accessible Travel and leisure, it was set up by three travel agents who themselves have found themselves disabled in later life. All the hotels they offer have personally checked and gives such details as door widths, bed heights and WC heights and also gives the terrain of the local area all the things you might require if you are a wheelchair user. Anyone wishing to view this brochure can contact Eric Johnstone on 663 9471 and arrange for the brochure to be lent to them Accessible travel also have a web page called www.accessibletravel.co.uk I should point out that the holidays on offer do not include any flights. Any one using this service please let FORWARD MID know their opinions



Outdoor events

It was decided at the January 2006 that in the summer forward mid are moving to outdoor events to build our profile. To enable the group recognised we will require to have some publicity made and will have to decide on design and content of this ? if you have any ideas please put them in writing and give them to Eric Johnstone at the MVA 4-6 white Hart Street, Dalkeith. Along with any design or motif we will also need various logos, so please put your heads together and please come up with some dynamic colourful ideas.

Bay Watch

How many times do you go out shopping and find that all the blue badge parking areas are taken up by people who do not have a blue badge. As the council operate this system I think they should be the one's to receive our complaints. But how? Please supply any ideas to FORWARD MID at MVA office 4-6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith or Phone Eric Johnstone on 6639471.