

# FORWARD MIDLOTHIAN DISABLED



## HELPING THE NHS HELP YOU



The **FORWARD MID** group have collaborated with the NHS and would like to ask you for your views on the primary health care services within Midlothian. It is **FORWARD MID'S** view and the NHS agree that health services should be accessible to all. It is from the people using these services that we have to listen to their views in order that the NHS can improve these services.

We are asking about your experiences of your visits to your primary health care and other services that are provided within your community, by this we mean the services that you receive outside of hospital, for example at your health centre or at home. This includes doctors appointments, nurse appointments, district nursing services, mental health services, physiotherapy and podiatry.

The point of this survey is to help the NHS services make sure their services are accessible to people with disabilities and are the same for people who are not disabled.

We would be very grateful if you could take a little of your time to answer the some questions. The information gathered will be used to help NHS to improve their services. We are also planning to hold a discussion group, and to visit G. P. surgeries to identify good practice and ways to improve. If you would like to be involved in these activities please phone **Eric Johnstone** on 0131-663-9471 and will send you out a questionnaire.

The Questionnaire is **Anonymous** but if you would like to take part in group discussion or visit to G.P.s practices then you will need to include your contact details. The questionnaire comes with a freepost return envelope.



We at **FORWARD MID** would like to thank all that participate in helping the NHS provide a primary care service that benefits the whole community.



## A Toilet To Far

Have you ever been travelling and had stop at the services to go to the toilet, I know I have, only to find out that the toilet is locked and you then have to go looking for an attendant to open the disabled toilet.

Well here is the answer the RADAR KEY this a system operated by The Royal Association For Disability and Rehabilitation's key scheme. You can obtain the key from RADAR at 12 City Forum, City Road, London EC1V 8AF at a cost of £3.50 the key unlocks over 4,000 toilets around the United Kingdom and comes with a list of toilets that it opens. You will have to declare that the individual who is getting the key is either chronically sick or has a disability to get vat relief.

You may be able to obtain a key free if your local council has opted to join the scheme, however John Simpson from midlothian council stated that they have not opted to join this scheme as their disabled toilets are open from during working hours.

For those with internet access there are several sites around the web so just type RADAR KEY into your search engine . Please Remember that these keys do come in very handy when travelling around in the United Kingdom.



## Current issues for Forward Mid

- ➔ Disability equality training.
- ➔ Promoting Disability Awareness at Community events.
- ➔ Developing Disability Information resource library.
- ➔ Working with Lothian Physical Disability Strategy group as part of Scrutiny Panel.
- ➔ Working with NHS in Midlothian – Access to Health project.
- ➔ Tackling issues of discrimination e.g. travel, access....
- ➔ Working with Local Area Coordinators to reach wider Disability network of service users.
- ➔ Working with Midlothian Councils Lead Planning group for Physical Disability.

## Profile of a member



Name: Iain Tait

Age : Same as my tongue and a little older than my teeth

Since leaving school I have lived and worked all over the United Kingdom and have seen a lot of the world, I served in the Royal Navy for ten years and then became a taxi owner for twenty years. I am married for the second time and have four children and two grand children .

I became disabled on July 15th 2002 and have been able to get one part time job for six weeks but was unable to cope with the work and the ailments.

I became a founder member of Forward MID and now take on the role of editing the newsletter and I am also taking on the role of web design and we hope to have the web page up and running in the very near future. Being part of Forward MID lets me get out and meet people and explain to them what it is like to be in a wheelchair and how some people treat me as a patient and not a person.

I believe that when I am home that I give my family the best and not what is left.

## Etiquette

We should say a Physically disabled person and not a cripple or a wheelchair user.



## Computing Made Easy

Forward MID appreciate that not everyone has a computer or can easily access the web pages that are advertised in this newsletter, if you fall into this category you may contact the MVA office and they will send out the relevant information, the number is 0131-663-9471

Computers are now available in all Midlothian libraries and can be used by producing a library card. There are also charities that can give you a computer and a personal teacher to help you get started, One of them is Leonard Cheshire Foundation on 0131-346-9040. A representative will visit and assess your position. Another way is to apply to McSense and enquire if they have any computers that may be available to disabled people, phone number is 0131-654-5707, this may be free or at a modest cost, libraries also run a short course on how to use computers.

### Accessible website guidance easier to get

PAS 78, 'Guide to good practice in commissioning Accessible websites', commissioned by the disability rights commission from the British standards institution, is now available to download (Word or pdf formats) at no charge from the D.R.C site at <http://www.drc-gb.org/pas>. Previously it had to be ordered from the BSI at £30 plus VAT.

### Employing and serving disabled people

A new web from the employer's forum on disability aims to provide the tools needed to build a business case for employing disabled customers. The realising potential web site, at <http://www.realising-potential.org>, accompanies a publication of the same name

### Look At Life

I was reading that an 84 year old South African man just past his entrance exams to study accountancy and economics 66 years after his first attempt, I wish him well but who is going to give him work experience. But then again some of the accountants and economists that I have seen maybe he will be a youngster. McGrath Regional Publications Ltd

## Accessible High Streets

Disability now and Scope's access equality awards scheme, are searching for the best and worst examples of high street access across the nation.

The scheme will recognise places and individuals where the best effort has been made to ensure disabled people can access all areas and shop independently. It will also highlight the most inaccessible places



A Team of disabled access experts will choose the best and worst examples of access, based on information from everyone who participates.

If you do decide to get involved there is a chance of winning a prize.

You can find and fill in the form on line at [www.disabilitynow.org.uk](http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk) or [www.accessequality.org.uk](http://www.accessequality.org.uk) or you can phone Eric Johnstone on 0131-663-9471 and ask for a **The U.K.s most accessible high street form** and he will get one sent out to you, and you can fill it in and post it to "Disability now, 800 Guilla Avenue, Kent Science Park, Sittingbourne, ME9 8GU"

## Buyers protection Guide

Are you thinking of buying a scooter, power-chair, stairlift or riser chair. THEN STOP. The Mobility matters network is a group of retailers where you can get honest advice. It is full of practical and useful advice, but the best advice they give is not to buy anything before you read from cover to cover.

To get your copy Phone 08705 134130 or write to Mobility matters, dept. DN, freepost NH0170, Kettering NN14 1BR or [www.mobilityripoff.co.uk](http://www.mobilityripoff.co.uk)

## FORWARD MID AT LOANHEAD

On the 4th of May 2006 at Loanhead miners FORWARD MID presented their first display set up by Eric Johnstone and tended by Iain Tait (pictured) and Jeff Adamson. The presentation was well received by those who attended and by the other stand holders and we were welcomed and invited to attend other functions with the same groups. Although the Loanhead venue was not well attended by the public, FORWARD MID still attracted the attention of several people who did not know that we existed and they showed interest in coming to future meetings. This outing showed all



that we are able to hold our heads high and provide disabled people with a voice so that if they live within Midlothian that they are not alone in their struggle with daily life. Iain Tait found this a very rewarding exercise in knowing that I am able to contribute and pass on knowledge of disabled peoples group and what we are doing to help make life easier and have a positive attitude on our outlook. We FORWARD MID will be attending some more events and meet the people and when dates are set I will post them in this newsletter when available. You can contact FORWARD MID on 0131-663 9471 or e-mail [dulce.tait@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:dulce.tait@tiscali.co.uk)

## Holidays in the United Kingdom

Some times you find that when you have booked a disabled holiday, things are not always what they say, there might be trouble with access or the toilet in the disabled bedroom has a step. If you have met this kind of problem then this maybe for you.

The Lin Berwick Trust was started in 1989 when Lin Berwick was frustrated by the difficulty in finding suitable holiday accommodation and she then decided to set up a trust to address this gap in the market. The trust first opened Berwick cottage in Norfolk in 1997 and received the highest accolade from Tourism for all, the cottage is designed for disabled people and their carers and can sleep six of which two can be disabled and boasts items for visually impaired, audio impaired and physically disabled and is set a quiet village close to a public house. But maybe Norfolk is a little to far to travel. The you will be pleased to know that The Lin Berwick Trust have just opened their second cottage with all the luxury has their first and it is situated in Direlton, East Lothian, Denis Duncan House was opened in April 2006.

Anyone interested should contact The Administrator on 01878 372343 or E-mail [info@thelinberwicktrust.org.uk](mailto:info@thelinberwicktrust.org.uk) or visit their web site [www.thelinberwicktrust.org.uk](http://www.thelinberwicktrust.org.uk)

## Bay Watch update

In Nafferton, East Yorkshire people are becoming very frustrated with abuse of disabled parking bays, they now take a camera out with them and are photographing the offending vehicles and writing to the offending company direct. This just happened to be a Royal Mail Van, The delivery office manager at Driffeld is to remind all staff on no account should they park in bays reserved for the disabled. The Royal Mail also apologised for any inconvenience caused.



Maybe this is the way we at Forward MID should go about things and start taking photographs and writing directly to the company that owns the van and ask for their comment. If you wish your say on this or any other matter then please call Eric Johnstone on 0131-663-9471 or E-mail Iain Tait at [dulce.tait@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:dulce.tait@tiscali.co.uk).

## Alternative Publications

The editions of the Forward MID newsletters are available in large print or alternative publications to meet peoples needs, if you require an alternative publication then please call Eric Johnstone on 0131-663-9471 or E-Mail to [eric.johnstone@mvacva.org.uk](mailto:eric.johnstone@mvacva.org.uk) or write to him at MVA 4-6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith EH22 1AE with your request