

FORWARD MIDLOTHIAN DISABLED



News From Forward Mid

The Disability Equality Duty

Doing the duty

The Disability Equality Duty comes into force in December 2006.

This new legal duty requires all public authorities to actively look at ways of ensuring that disabled people are treated equally.

It's time to Raise your Equality

The Disability Equality Duty (DED) is an important new duty aimed at promoting disability equality across the public sector. The DED, also referred to as the general duty, sets out what public authorities must have due regard to in order to promote equality of opportunity.

Most public authorities are also covered by specific duties, which set out a framework to assist authorities in meeting their general duty. All public authorities covered by the specific duties must:

- publish a Disability Equality Scheme (including within it an Action Plan)
- involve disabled people in producing the Scheme and Action Plan
- demonstrate they have taken actions in the Scheme and achieved appropriate outcomes
- report on progress
- review and revise the Scheme

Nothing about us, without us...

A fundamental part of the new duty is that for the first time ever public authorities have a statutory requirement to involve disabled people in achieving disability equality.

Involving disabled people increases the likelihood of success, thus increasing your chances of reaching

your strategic objectives

For the best chance to achieve disability equality, public authorities should involve disabled people in the development of their Disability Equality Schemes and beyond.

The involvement of disabled people requires active engagement of disabled stakeholders rather than purely consultation. It must also be focused and joined up to avoid involvement fatigue on all sides. Disabled people can bring a wide range of knowledge and expertise. This new duty is a great opportunity to tackle inequality and utilise the expertise on your doorstep. Forward Mid have worked well over the last few months with Newbattle Abbey College in developing their Disability Equality Duty Scheme and will continue to be involved and evaluate their scheme in 2007 –8.

The DRC has produced overview guidance to help you get started on your Scheme. This document contains information on key dates and details of the Disability Equality Scheme and on the Action Plan that will need to be completed.

You can download a copy at www.drc-gb.org, or order a copy from the DRC Helpline. 08457 622 633

WE WISH ALL OUR READERS A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Midlothian Social Work

Have you ever sat at home and wondered what you can do for yourself if your disability gets worse and find that you can no longer manage? We at FORWARD MID have so we approached the social services and asked how to contact them . So this article might be a good idea to cut out and keep somewhere safe remember, or you can contact FORWARD MID through the MVA on 0131-663-9471 and we can help you with your enquiry

MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL WORKING FOR YOU.



What we do

Social Work in Midlothian provides and purchases a wide range of services to meet the assessed needs of individuals and their carers. (Our main activities are, assessing needs and making care arrangements.)

If you (or someone you know) has a disability and feel that you may benefit from the services that Social Work can provide, in the first instance you should contact the Community Care Access Team and ask for an assessment of your care needs to be carried out. Social Work staff will work with you and /or your carer on a personal basis respecting your dignity, individuality and rights. Midlothian Council has a set budget within which to provide Social Work services and a high demand is made for these services. Everyone is dealt with fairly using the same criteria to determine their situation to ensure that services are delivered so that people in greatest need and those most at risk of losing their independence are first to receive a service.

You can contact the Community Care Access Team, Loanhead Social Work Centre, 4 Clerk Street Loanhead EH20 9DR or telephone 0131 271 3900 and ask for the Duty Social Worker.

A web site for women with disabilities

A web called Aurora is a website that is dedicated to woman with disabilities that has a variety of sections for including beauty and fashion and has a thrice yearly internet magazine and a guest book and message page that you post a question to get information. This is a internet only web and can be found at <http://www.anaurora.co.uk>

Profile of a Member



Name: Gary sowersby

Age: Unsure, but I was born at a very early age.

I live in penicuik , I find this group stimulating as nobody judges you and my suggestions are as valid as everyone else's I like to do what I am able to do for the group, but as the FORWARD MID is getting known around \Midlothian and even further a field the work the group is doing is getting more and more and as we are a disabled ourselves and represent the disabled sector, I would like to more people joining and taking an active role.

FORWARD MID

This issue marks our first year of publication of the FORWARD MID newsletter, I, Iain Tait would like to take this opportunity to thank all that have donated their time to provide the newsletter with interesting facts. If you would like to add anything in the newsletter then please either put it in writing and send it to the MVA office 4-6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith EH22 1AE or E-mail it direct to dulce.tait@tiscali.co.uk. I won't say that the newsletter has been easy but I enjoy the challenge of getting it out every two months. We have come a long way from the beginning with our first meeting in the John Chant Centre, Penicuik. Looking forward to 2007.....

New Joint LSA/DRC Disability Rights Project

The disability rights commission has funded LSA to provide a new service for people with disabilities. It is for people who are discriminated against in goods, service and education because they are disabled. Included are those from 4/12/2006, will have protection from discrimination in public transport and crucially housing. The service will advise clients not only as regards discrimination but also the extent to which service providers have made reasonable adjustments.

The new project provides a complete service answering telephone, E-mail and written queries, seeing clients by appointment and where absolutely necessary, undertaking home visits. Of course mentally and physical disabilities are covered.

The service can undertake cases at all court levels. In exceptional circumstances, it may be possible to undertake litigation without the benefit of legal aid.

The solicitor running this project is Joe Bryce who can be contacted by phoning 0141-353-3354 or by E-mailing on joebryce@lsa.org.uk

A global perspective

The UN says there are at least 60m disabled people in Africa. But are they being catered for by the societies they live in?



Disabled people are often excluded from schools and therefore have limited opportunities to find work. For many begging

becomes a sole means of survival. In Uganda some people who have lost legs cannot even be recognized by their own government.

But some disabled people are taking control of their future, according to the UN body African Decade of Person With Disability. It says, "soon we will be leading the world in numbers of disabled entrepreneurs."

The full article on disability in Africa can be found on the BBC web site at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/5372212.stm> The bbc also has a website for disabled called <http://www.bbc.co.uk/ouch/> it has a variety of features for disabled people and also has a blog site for you to leave your own message for all to read.

ServiceCall for disabled drivers

Since Disability discrimination act became law a number of large organisations have installed service call. This works by the user having a small transmitter that costs £9.95



and comes with a free sticker.

ServiceCall is a system designed to make it easier for a person with limited mobility to use a range of everyday services

So how does it work? you look for service that has a sign like the orange one opposite and point your transmitter at it and somebody should come to your help.

Some places that have this are petrol stations, banks and building societies, pharmacies and post office and even supermarkets lately some doctors surgeries are getting them installed. They also supply a small directory of places in your postcode area that have the system already up and working.

Thanks to Marlene Gill for this item

Holiday report

This year I went with my family to Flamingoland in Yorkshire, It was a self catering in a caravan that had been adapted to take wheelchairs. The caravan itself was well adapted and the toilet had pull rails and the shower had a seat in it. The only two faults I had with the caravan was no bed pulls and the kitchen wasn't adapted, but everything else was very good to good, the ramp was a bit steep but that was all. The theme park was an example of how it should be with ramps all the way up to the rides that were suitable for disabled people to go on, the staff all encouraged disabled to go up the exit ramp and skip a lot of queuing, there were rides that would be impossible for disabled people to ride but were well signposted and told you the stress the ride would cause and recommend disabled people not to ride.

The animal reserve was also fully accessible to all wheelchair users and they presented shows that you are invited to meet some of the animals on display such as sealions and bird of prey shows.

My two boys had a really enjoyable holiday as they were both allowed on a lot of the rides by themselves and my wife found it to relaxing and even joined the boys on some of the more adventures rides. The holiday included free entrance to the theme park swimming pool and animal reserve. There were a number of different places to eat on site form take aways to formal dining and evening entertainment, so cooking in the caravan was kept to the bear minimum.

Overall this was a most enjoyable holiday and I would recommend any disabled people with children to have a look at Flimongoland. Their address is <http://www.flamingoland.co.uk/> and their phone number is 0870 752 8000. If this what you are looking for I would rate this highly.

Brought to you by Iain Tait



A positive response from Tesco

Tesco have replied on the 30th August to a letter sent to them by Jeff Adamson of Forward MID on the issue of misuse of Blue Badge parking, in their reply from the hardengreen branch Melanie Gibb states the store Manager Chris McIntyre is keen to hold customer panels with regards to this issue or any other issue affecting their customers who use this store. We are now awaiting an invitation from Chris McIntyre to attend his meeting so that we can put our concerns forward. If you have any other questions for Tesco please forward them to Eric Johnstone at MVA office

Newsletter distribution

As you aware we have to try and recycle everything. To help us along the Post office have raised the cost of posting. At the last meeting we discussed this and have decided that the newsletter should stay the same size, so for those that still want to receive the newsletter by post it will now come folded in a smaller envelope alternatively you could receive as a PDF file on your computer through the E-mail you will need Acrobat Reader this can be downloaded from www.forwardmid.org.uk if you would prefer it this way please contact Eric Johnstone and let him know.

Alternative Publications

The editions of the Forward MID newsletters are available in large print or a E-mail publications For alternative publication please E-mail to eric.johnstone@mvacva.org.uk or call Eric Johnstone on 0131-663-9471 or write to him at MVA 4-6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith EH22 1AE with your request.