

**Forward**

**Midlothian**

**Disabled People**

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

**Equality - Diversity - Inclusion**



pass IT on

- ✓ Do you have a disability or long term health condition?
- ✓ Does this make it difficult or impossible to use a publicly available computer (eg in a library)?
- ✓ Would having your own computer at home make a significant difference to your quality of life?
- ✓ Do you live in the EH postcode area?

### Reusing Computers, Transforming Lives

If so, call Pass IT On **0131 476 1645**  
To find out how Pass IT On can help you.

**Pass IT On** is a local charity. Pass IT On refurbish and adapt donated computers and provide them free of charge to people who, due to a disability or long-term health condition, find it difficult or impossible to access publicly available computers.

To register yourself or someone else as a client,  
Or for more information:

VISIT: [www.passitoncomputers.co.uk](http://www.passitoncomputers.co.uk)

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FOLLOW PASS IT ON

FACEBOOK:

 [www.facebook.com/passitoncomputers/](http://www.facebook.com/passitoncomputers/)

EMAIL:  [admin@passitoncomputers.co.uk](mailto:admin@passitoncomputers.co.uk)



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## Forward Mid's Facebook page.



Like the BBC, the aim of Forward Mid's page is to inform, educate and entertain.

We aim to inform people of Forward Mid's achievements and planned events as well as those of other organisations who work with disabled people both locally and nationally.

We aim to educate by providing information on initiatives, again, local and national, that have the potential to improve the lives of disabled people.

We aim to entertain by sharing unusual, amusing and innovative disability related posts from around the world.

All this without having to pay a licence fee! Just like and follow our page and be informed, educated and entertained for free.

[www.facebook.com/forwardmid/](http://www.facebook.com/forwardmid/)

## Transport Issues

Hello everyone, my name is Rowan and I am working on a project looking at travel by Midlothian students to the four Edinburgh College campuses.

While my focus is on students, I understand that residents living in Midlothian often rely on public transport, and I would be keen to find out people's different experiences of transport around Midlothian and Edinburgh.

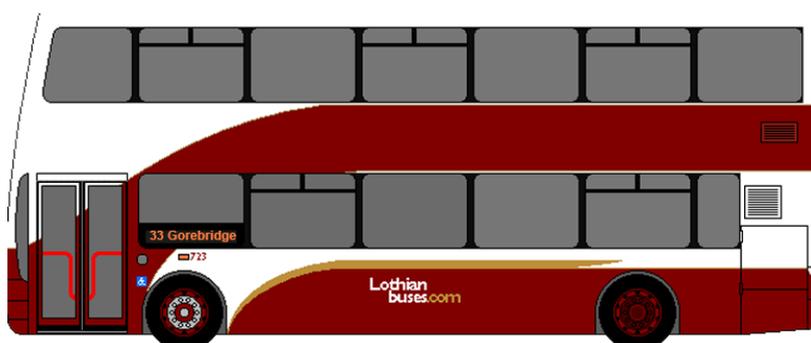
- Is the frequency of buses suitable for your needs?
- Do you use Community Transport?
- Have you used Dial-a-Bus?



Forward Mid kindly offered me a space in this newsletter, and I would love to hear your take on transport, and how it affects you.

My contact details are below, please use whatever form of contact you prefer.

Hope to hear from you soon,  
Rowan Berry  
Phone ☎ 0131 663 9471  
Email address ✉ [intern@mvacvs.org.uk](mailto:intern@mvacvs.org.uk)  
Address Rowan Berry  
Midlothian Voluntary Action  
4/6 White Hart Street  
Dalkeith  
EH22 1AE



# Café Connect

is a community cafe in Dalkeith. It's a place for physically disabled people, carers, friends and family of disabled people, in fact anyone, to get together for a blether over a free cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit or two.



## FORWARD MID

FORWARD MID is an active Vibrant and Purposeful group of people whose aim is to improve the lives of Physically disabled people in Midlothian at home, at work and in the community.

For further details please contact Eric Johnstone Tel:  0131 663 9471

**FORWARD**  
**MIDLOTHIAN**  
**DISABLED PEOPLE**



*Equality - Diversity - Inclusion*

Last Tuesday of  
the month

2 P.M. - 4 P.M.

Dalkeith Old

People's Welfare,  
**Saint Andrew Street,**  
**Dalkeith,**  
**Midlothian.**

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



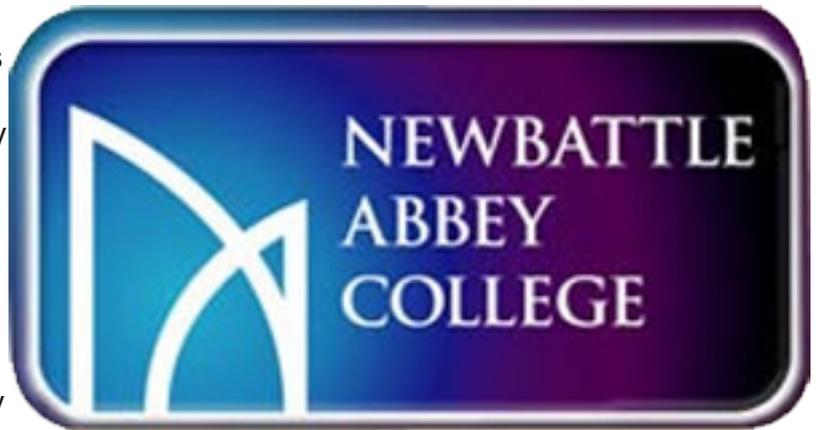
# Newbattle's Adult Achievement Awards

Adult Achievement Awards enable adults of all ages to gain national accreditation for the informal learning they have undertaken in a wide range of contexts – in the community, through volunteering, in the workplace, at home, in college and in prison. These unique awards were developed by Newbattle Abbey College and is currently available at Levels 3, 4 and 6 on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). They offer a national qualification to adults and support progression to further learning or employment. The awards have been piloted successfully across Scotland and are based upon effective local and national partnerships.

Adults are asked to:-

- **Describe the learning they have been involved with – it can be current learning or learning undertaken in the past year,**
- **Reflect on the skills they have gained,**
- **Plan future learning in any context.**

They are asked to complete the exercises in a Learner Guide, which is basically a workbook. Once they have done this, they complete a Reflective Journal, which is the only document to be assessed. The Reflective Journal may be completed online, in writing, by tape or with the help of a scribe. If the journal matches all of the details required to the level of the award undertaken, it will be certificated by Newbattle Abbey College.



Learners involved in the pilot programme have ranged from 16 – 80 years old. Many have additional support needs, have mental health issues or have physical disabilities. All adults have reported that their confidence and self-esteem have increased through their involvement in the awards and many have improved their social involvement. The awards will be available across Scotland from September 2017.

For further details of costs or other information please contact:-  
Marian Docherty at [mariand@newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk](mailto:mariand@newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk)

## get **2**gether

I think it is good that people know what it means to be part of get2gether and to raise awareness about the national campaign to stay up late! But if you think differently, that is also okay.

At the minute we only do one event per month in Midlothian and next one is the glitter ball on the 28th July 2017, at the Loanhead Miners Welfare. Tickets cost up to £7.00 and carers go free. For more information or to book tickets please phone get2gether  07551 125 726. or visit [get2gether.org.uk/](http://get2gether.org.uk/) They are also on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/get2getherscotland/](http://www.facebook.com/get2getherscotland/)

get2gether will soon be recruiting a local ambassador for Midlothian, get2gether will have a paid job opportunity coming soon! for a person with knowledge in Midlothian.

# Wellbeing Service

The **Midlothian Wellbeing Service** is a partnership between Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership, the Thistle Foundation and the Community Health Inequalities Team. Wellbeing Practitioners are based in six local GP practices – Bonnyrigg, Dalkeith, Eastfield, Newbattle, Newbyres and Penicuik – and work alongside the GPs and other practice staff to support people with long-term conditions.



We all know that GPs are limited in the time they can provide in each appointment – on average around 7.5 minutes – and often people have other issues they want to discuss. So GPs and other practice staff can refer people to the **Wellbeing Service** where people will be offered time with a **Wellbeing Practitioner**. The role of the Wellbeing Practitioners is to provide the time and space for people to talk about what is important to them and how they can move forward with some of the challenging issues in their life, including their health issues.

The key to this is supporting people to identify what matters to them, not what the matter is with them, and for the focus to be on how they are already coping and managing (their own resources and resourcefulness), and what they would want to change in the future. From this 'good conversation' people begin to identify small and sometimes larger steps that they can take to make those changes, and also identify what support they might need to do this.



Adults from 18 to 90+ are accessing the **Wellbeing Service**, and in being given the time to talk and reflect are making changes which ultimately benefits their mental and physical health – their whole wellbeing.

If you would like to know more then please contact...All  Numbers

**Kenny Richardson 078 66 847 290**

**Ann Morrison: 07972 732 888**

**Kirsty McBeth: 075 25 100 562**

**Nick Bernie: 078 66 847 291**

**Sandra Mackenzie: 078 76 035 660**



# A Speech by Baroness Jane Campbell

My Lords, last March a disabled friend said to me, “Why aren’t you doing anything on Brexit and disability?” I didn’t see a connection, so he listed three potential consequences if this country were to leave the EU.

1. Weaker protection from workplace discrimination.
2. Repeal of EU accessibility laws on transport and the provision of goods and services.
3. The end of access to the EU workforce, as a source for the recruitment of Personal Assistants and carers.



## This was my wake-up call.

I realised that if these concerns were not addressed, leaving the EU would be problematic for disabled people. So I wrote an article for the Guardian warning, that “**go it alone Britain could leave disabled people out in the cold again.**” The response from disabled people was phenomenal, as they too woke up to the potential ramifications.

Well, the UK did vote to leave, so I am most grateful to the Noble Baroness, Lady Scott for starting this important conversation today.

As time is short, I will concentrate on the area I’m most familiar with - **the workforce who facilitate independent living for disabled people** - like me. I declare an interest as someone who has employed Personal Assistants (some call them carers) from at least 10 EU countries, during the past 25 years.

I am not unusual. There are thousands of other disabled people who do the same. Our PAs, are a mixture of UK and EU nationals. They are crucial to our independence and our freedom to enjoy private and family life, to work, socialise and maybe raise children. Our employees are mainly funded by social care or health care Personal Budgets.

When preparing for this debate, I searched for data on how many EU nationals were employed as PAs. I contacted the UK Home Care Association and Independent Living PA agencies, like Independent Living Alternatives and PA Pool. And found no PA-specific data was available. But we know there are over 70,000 EU citizens working in social care. I then contacted disabled employers and their employees through social media to find out more about their reasons for seeking PAs from the EU as well as the UK.

Firstly, everyone I heard from said that the pool of potential UK employees was drying up, yet demand for care workers continues to rise. The EU workforce was, therefore, an essential supplement and all were concerned about moves to restrict it.

Other reasons given for recruiting EU Nationals were, a strong work ethic and reliability; The job tending to attract single people, who, as a rule, are found to be more flexible in their working hours, giving many valued opportunities for spontaneity. They are keen to fill live-in positions with employment with accommodation. This helps with those who live in rural villages, where local employees are limited. Some commute to and from their home countries between work stints. Such flexibility is a win-win situation for both employers and employees.

My Lords, I also spoke to John Evans, a quadriplegic man and pioneer of Independent Living for disabled people in the UK and internationally. He said,

**“I have been free from residential care for 34 years, employing my own PAs who support me to have full control of my life. They have come from 15 different EU countries. Without their support, I could not do my work at home and abroad. If the Government does not make some kind of arrangement to protect our access to the EU PA workforce, I will lose my freedom again”**

We constantly hear about the threat to the NHS if restrictions to work in the UK tighten. The PAs and carers employed by thousands of disabled people must be accorded the same attention. Otherwise, the current Social Care crisis will worsen and disabled people will lose the right to independent living, as set out in **Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People**.

My Lords, the Equality and Human Rights Commission share my concern on this issue. In their evidence to the Joint Committee on Human Rights’ Brexit inquiry. It said that any change in immigration rules should be subjected to a rigorous equality and human rights impact assessment and that steps must be taken to mitigate negative impacts.

Would the Noble Lord, the Minister assure the House that this assessment will be carried out rigorously and shared with Parliament? Will he also guarantee that disabled people and their organisations will be thoroughly involved with any Brexit developments regarding access to the EU workforce? Our independence depends upon it.

Thank you

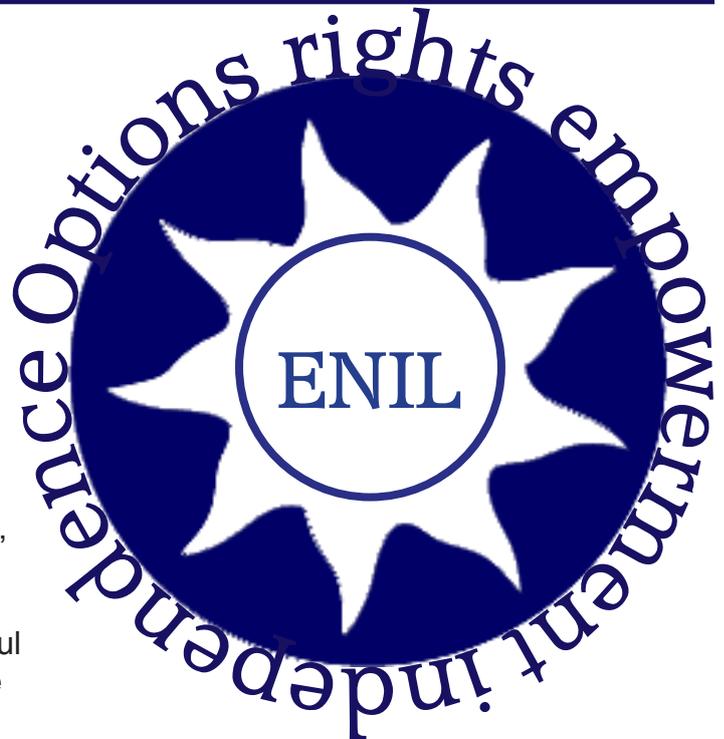
Baroness Jane Campbell

## What We Can Do

So, in conclusion to the Baroness’ speech, disabled people’s organisations like **ENIL** and others, have a crucial role in Brexit. It’s vital that they all play a part in educating and informing Government and all others now involved in the Brexit Parliamentary process. We need to convince them why it’s important they pay attention to ensuring Disabled People’s right to Independent Living continues to thrive and develop as Brexit legislation materialises. The Independent Living movement has an enormous role to play in Brexit.

Informative consultation between PA’s agencies, an informative, co-productive relationship which is so important for the people involved in the legislator and Disabled people can provide helpful information. **Wakes them up to the importance of Disabled People’s independent living agenda throughout this period or lose what we have fought so hard to gain.**

And whatever you do, please ensure that you and disabled people’s organisations all over Europe, lobby hard to prevent whoever the Prime Minister will be from leaving the European Convention on Human Rights post-Brexit.



# Glasgow Royal Concert Hall

One of my favourite comedians is Jeff Dunham, my boys bought me a birthday present in January to go and watch him in Glasgow. Great, a birthday present I will really enjoy.

Then we went to the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. Here, access for a wheelchair was haphazard; there is one slow lift up to the mezzanine level which is where the concession stands are; here the queue to be served blocks the entrance to the only lift to the two viewing levels.

The view for wheelchair users is very good near the stage; there is enough space for four wheelchairs and room for four carers at both sides of the auditorium, the same again on the upper floor above. That means enough space for 16 wheelchair users – brilliant.

The NKS (radar key) disabled toilet is down on the mezzanine and as far away from the lift as humanly possible. So there is not enough time for 16 wheelchair users to get into the lift that can only take one wheelchair at a time. When the show is over there are 16 wheelchair users, and non-disabled people trying to use the one lift to go down to the mezzanine level – then another queue from the mezzanine to the ground floor.

If any time in the future you are planning a trip to the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall please bear in mind the lifts between floors are slow. You will require extra time to arrive and a lot more time to leave.

I am sure this is a known problem and will be sorted at the next remodelling.

Iain



## Midlothian Health & Social Care Partnership

### Your GP Practice

We know that it can be hard to get an appointment to see your GP, but why is that and what can we do to make things better?

#### 1. Why is demand for GP appointments so high?

We are living longer

- This is good news! However it means that some of us need more help from our GP and other health services.
- As we live longer we also live with more health conditions.

More people stay at home

- Instead of having to go to hospital or move into a care home, more people are being looked after in their own home.
- This is the right thing to do, but it puts more pressure on GP services.

### We are using GPs more

- We are going to see the GP more for things that do not need medical help or that we could deal with ourselves.
- We also expect more from GPs when we see them, for example we expect problems to be sorted out quickly
- It can be hard to know when to see a GP or who else could help. .

### There are fewer GPs

- Fewer doctors are choosing to work as a GP
- GPs are choosing to retire earlier or work part-time
- As the number of people in Midlothian increases it is hard to find more GPs to work here.

## 2. What are the issues that people have told us about?

### Quality of care

- People are consistently very satisfied with the quality of care they receive from GPs and Nurses

### Waiting time to see a GP

- People are finding it harder to access GP appointments. Waiting times have increased.

### Phoning the practice

- It can be very difficult to get through to GP practices on the phone. When people do get through sometimes appointments have run out.

### Booking ahead for follow up appointments

- Some systems do not allow people to book very far ahead even for follow up appointments. This can be difficult for people who need to plan in order to attend.

### Signposting by reception staff

- Some people feel strongly that they do not want to give personal information to anyone other than a doctor

### Concern about population increase

- People see new houses being built in their neighbourhood and are concerned about the impact this is having on health services

### Phone appointments

- Some people like phone appointments but some people find them difficult.

### Being able to see the same GP

- It has become more difficult to see a specific doctor. This is particularly important for people living with ongoing health conditions.

### Use of other services

- Some people are happy to see a nurse rather than a doctor, others say they are not sure what a nurse can or cannot do. Accessing physiotherapy can take a long time.

### Accessing services directly

- People need more information about which services can be accessed directly. They would like to be able to access more services directly

### Restricted lists

- People are concerned about restricted lists. Some understand this to mean that people cannot register with a GP in the area, which is not the case

### Using Out of Hours services

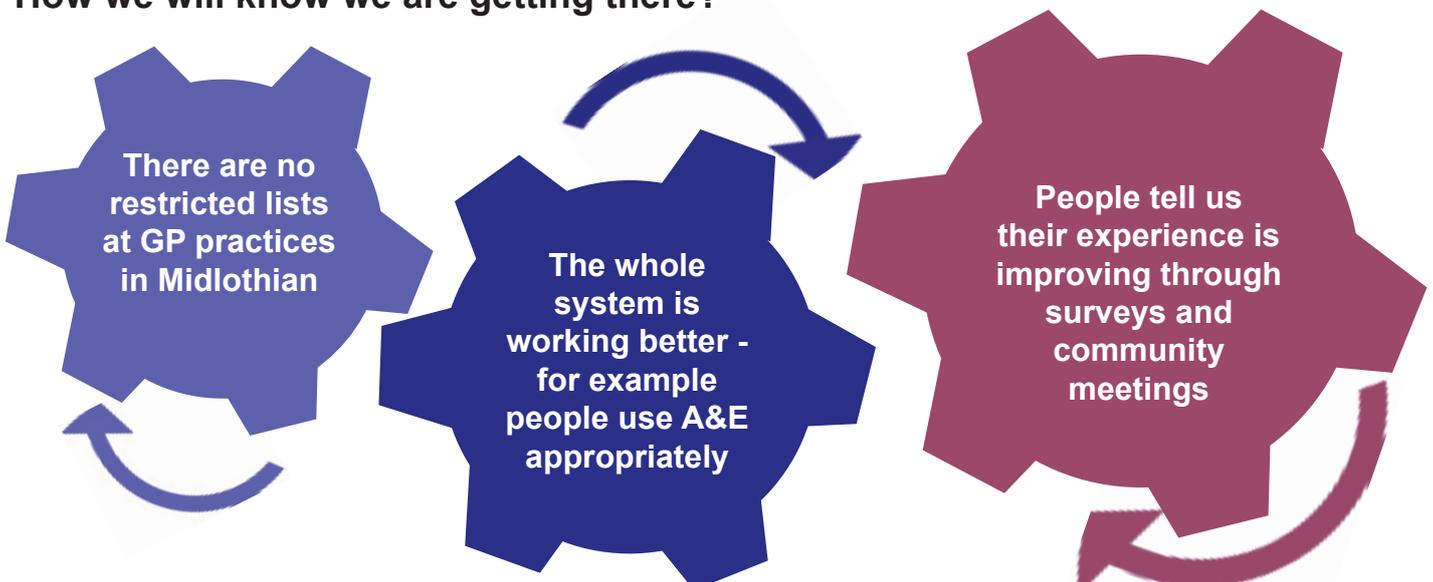
- We think some people might use out of hours GP services or A&E instead of trying to get a GP appointment. Some people might choose not to seek medical help at all.

## 3. What do we need to do about it?

### Our Vision:

- We want General Practice in Midlothian to be **sustainable** and able to cope with **current and future demand**.
- We want **better care** and **better health** for everyone that **costs less** per person.

## How we will know we are getting there?



## How will we do this?

### 1. Reduce pressure on our current GP practices



Open a new GP clinic in Newtongrange that can take 4000 patients



Upgrade Newbyres building in Gorebridge so the practice can take more patients in the future



Loanhead practice will move into new, bigger premises within the Community School Campus



Review GP practice boundaries so that demand from new housing is spread fairly across all the practices

### 2. GP practices, other health and care services, the voluntary sector and the community are working together more.



Find ways for GPs and hospital staff to work more closely together



Run a pilot project in Penicuik to find new ways for GPs, social care staff and voluntary organisations to support people who are housebound



Look at how out of hours care can be provided by other staff as well as GPs



Support GP practices to engage with the public and work together to make things better

### 3. Culture Change and People Development



Provide support to GP practices so that they can strengthen their team and improve how services are organised, for example training for reception staff



Pay some GPs to work with the Health and Social Care Partnership so that they have time to help lead and develop the service

#### 4. More services are working in GP surgeries, people know where to go for help, and there are more services people can use without having to see a GP



Make sure people know about their healthcare options through the "Do I need to see a GP?" Communication project



Test out having a physiotherapist within a GP practice team



Put pharmacists in GP practices to check your medicine and offer advice



Find out if the new services in GP practices help people to get the support they need more quickly and reduce pressure on GP services. These include the Midlothian Wellbeing Access Point, the Wellbeing Service and the Carers Advice Service

#### 5. Better care for people that costs less



Use technology better so that we can identify and support people who are frail before they become unwell



Make sure we are prescribing the right medicines at the right time



Continue to check that our services are good quality



Take action to make sure more people register with a dentist, especially groups such as prison leavers



Help more people make plans for their future care and make sure these plans are carried out

### 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 Tel: 0131-663-9471 or email [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**