

Forward Midlothian Disabled People

www.forwardmid.org.uk

Equality - Diversity - Inclusion



New Forward Mid Directory for Disabled People 2020

Forward Mid launched their Directory for Disabled People 2020 on 16 March.

Amongst those attending the launch was Jeremy Balfour MSP. He said, "Great to attend Forward Mid's launch event for the Midlothian Disabled People's Directory yesterday.

We would like to thank the many people who made it to the launch and all those involved in making it possible.

Resources like these are essential in empowering people with disabilities by providing them with clear, up-to-date and useful information, tips and contact details."

Since the advent of the coronavirus pandemic this Directory is even more indispensable than it has ever been. It is an essential guide to services, public, private and 3rd sector, that are available in Midlothian. The services which can support disabled people to live an ordinary or extraordinary life, fully integrated into society and being recognised as valued members of our community.

The New Forward Mid 2020 Directory can be downloaded from the Forward Mid web site in two formats a print version or electronic version for mobile devices both versions can be found at www.forwardmid.org.uk/directory1to14.html



A limited number of hard copies are available free of charge. Phone Eric on ☎ 0131-663-9471 to check availability and have the directory posted out to you.

Stay Safe in these difficult times.

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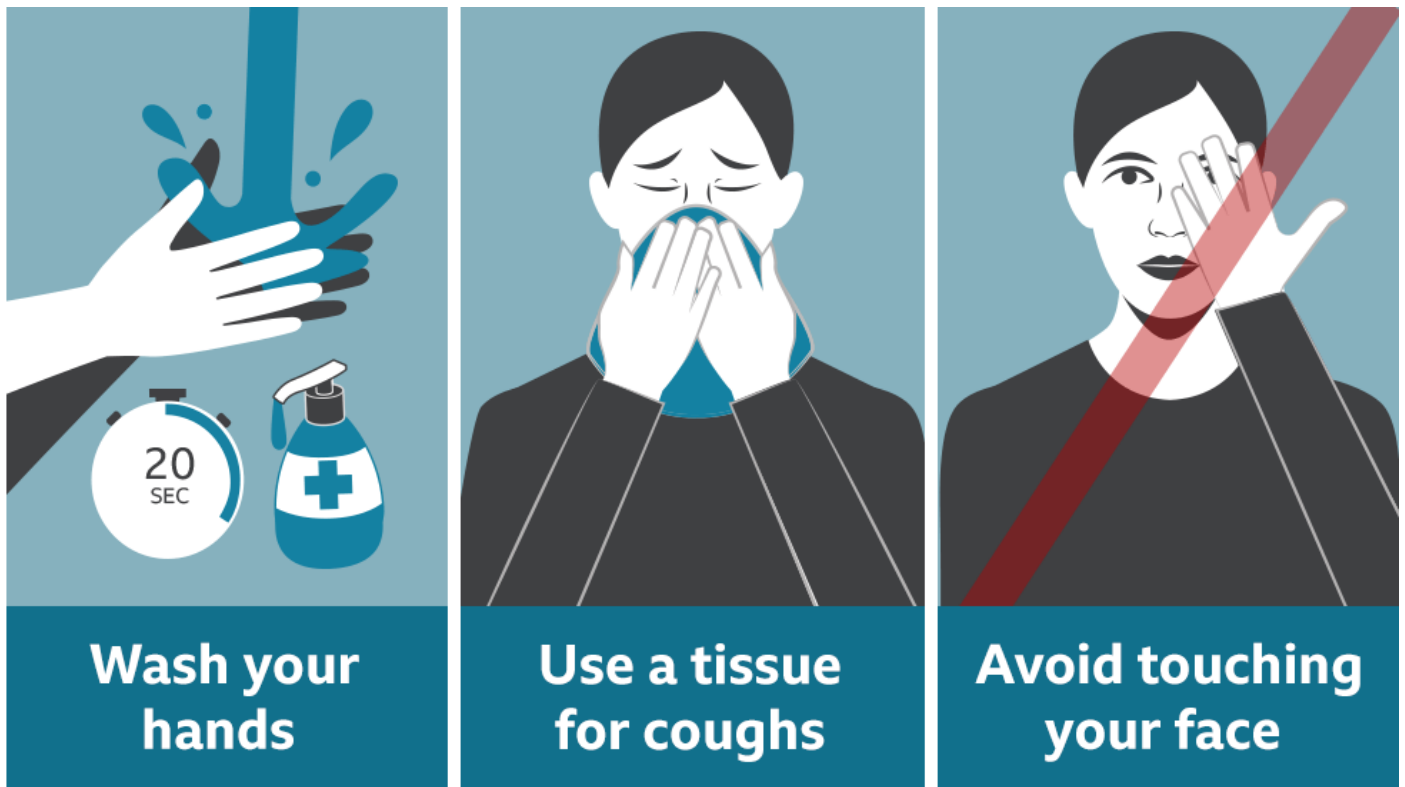
Useful information and staying well during corona virus

Information during the Corona Virus is always evolving Forward Mid is only able to provide information and links as it becomes available:

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Latest guidance about COVID-19 from NHS Scotland and the Scottish Government, including social distancing and stay at home advice.

www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19



SCVO (Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations) have consolidated a lot of useful information into one place <https://scvo.org.uk/support/covid-19>

Midlothian Council:

The council has now moved to critical service delivery only and will now focus on our core statutory duties. To enable this, the council is suspending responses to enquiries or complaints about its service provision and will instead be focusing its efforts to prioritise its statutory services, caring for the vulnerable, cooperating with their Resilience Partners and supporting economic recovery. More info at <https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/coronavirus> and [#KindnessMidlothian](https://twitter.com/KindnessMidlothian)



Midlothian

Local communities

Help for people in local communities is being coordinated with support from community councils and the Communities and Lifelong Learning Team.

If you are self isolating and don't have family, friends and neighbours you can call on, contact CLL@midlothian.gov.uk or use Twitter to contact us [@MidHelp](https://twitter.com/MidHelp). We may be able to help with issues such as money, medicines, food, pets and feeling lonely.

I suspect many people are without the internet and cannot use these methods of contacting

Midlothian Council if this is the case then phone ☎ 0131 270 7500 for more information

Service changes:

Midlothian Sure Start has now closed 4 of its centres, with Paradykes and Woodburn open for core cover.

Grassy Riggs - new contact numbers for staff new contact numbers: ☎ 07309 277 591 & ☎ 07309 282 979

Food Banks

The food bank is for people that are unable to afford food, rather than those who are able to buy their own supplies, but unable to get to the shops at this time. These groups of people should be accessing support from other organisations and family and friends and we encourage you to contact anyone who may be able to support in these cases.



We are now operating a closed door policy and people coming to the food bank can ring the bell and we will bring the food to the door. The primary concern is ensuring that anyone who needs a food bank remains able to access food in a way that is safe for everyone involved, and we hope that with your help, we will be able to ensure no one falls through the gap at this challenging time.

For more information about how to access a food bank near you, contact Midlothian Council Contact Centre on ☎ 0131 2707500.

Cyber Security:

Please remain vigilant with your emails. Message from Police: 'Scammers are sending out coronavirus-themed phishing emails which attempt to trick people into opening malicious attachments or revealing sensitive information about themselves such as personal and financial details. In the same way that we have seen fake TV licensing and HMRC emails, we are now seeing phishing emails claiming to be from organisations affiliated with the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). There have also been some variations on current scams with fake emails appearing to be from HMRC offering a tax rebate due to the Coronavirus.' **If you do not recognise the person sending you and attachment do not open it.**

Staying connected during the Coronavirus outbreak

Vulnerable and older people could be feeling more isolated and lonely over the coming weeks, with Coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance advising people to limit social contact.

Staying in touch, whilst protecting family, friends and loved ones is important and can make a big difference to people who are feeling alone at this time.

For many, the telephone will be the easiest and most accessible way to keep in contact. Keeping in touch digitally, through video chat, whatsapp groups, instant messages or texts may also be an

option for some.

The following organisations can also offer support by telephone:

Breathing Space Scotland ☎ 0800 83 85 87

Advisors are available in the evenings (06:00 hrs - 02:00 hrs) and at the weekends (24 hours) for anyone feeling low, anxious or isolated.

The Silver Line ☎ 0800 4 70 80 90

Friendship and advice 24 hours a day for older people

Samaritans ☎ 116 123

Volunteers who will listen or talk through your worries (available 24 hours)

Red Cross:

The Red Cross in Midlothian are providing telephone welfare calls and emergency food shopping for people. Their office number is ☎ 0131-654-0340.

Connecting Digitally

Mind - practical advice and check-lists on your wellbeing in relation to coronavirus. www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/

Mental Health Foundation - information on topics such as stress management and keeping active during the coronavirus outbreak. www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak

Health In Mind's Crisis Support line ☎ 0131 663 5533

For people in Midlothian - if 'You are experiencing a crisis that is affecting your mental health and wellbeing'

Open Monday to Friday 16:00 hrs -22:00 hrs, Saturday and Sunday 10:00 hrs -16:00 hrs.

www.health-in-mind.org.uk/

Dementia: Alzheimer's Scotland has produced useful guidance on Coronavirus for people with dementia and their carers: DEMENTIA GUIDANCE Details on changes to their services and useful information for staff can be found on the web site, some volunteers from community response have expressed some reticence/uncertainty at how to work with people with dementia, even if not in a direct capacity. The following online videos might be useful, especially if specialist teams of volunteers focused on different demographics form:

<https://lms.learn.sssc.uk.com/course/view.php?id=41>

www.alzscot.org/our-work/dementia-friendly-communities/dementia-friends-scotland/become-a-dementia-friend-online/become-a-dementia-friend-online-step-one

If particular instances arise that volunteers might want advice or support with dementia issues, Michael Huddleston can advise ☎ 0131 654 1114 | ☎ 07831 859490, mhuddleston@alzscot.org



Resources for Mental Health: Free online courses for supporting mental health in the workplace in light of coronavirus: www.britsafe.org/

National Emergencies Trust: There is now an appeal for funding to help people most affected by the coronavirus. nationalemergenciestrust.org.uk/

INCLUSION SCOTLAND - COVID-19

Inclusion Scotland continues to operate during this time. Our staff are working remotely and can be contacted by telephone, email and online. We are speaking to policy and decision-makers about ensuring that disabled people's social, financial, health and care needs are met and that we have all the accessible information we need. You can follow our updates on social media – details to the right on this page.



For individual advice and information, Disability Information Scotland are continuing to offer a service at www.disabilityscot.org.uk or call ☎ 0300 323 9961. You can call them between 09:30 hrs and 16:00hrs.

If you call them and you get their Voicemail, please leave a short message with your contact details and they will get back to you. Alternatively, you can email them at info@disabilityscot.org.uk

Lothian Center for inclusive living

Important information for LCiL service users regarding coronavirus/ COVID-19

www.lothiancil.org.uk/important-information-for-lcil-service-users-regarding-coronavirus-covid-19/

LCiL
Rights & Choices



Shielding

The government is moving to a policy of 'shielding,' that is almost total isolation for people in 6 very high risk groups. More info: www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-shielding#overview

Therefore, there will be some very isolated people in our communities. It will be very difficult for carers as they are supposed to minimise contact with the vulnerable person.



For information on who is affected please use the link above and check back regularly as it will change.

Healthy Eating: Some suggestions for affordable cooking from CLL [RECIPE BOOK](#)

Public Transport

Lothian Buses & East Coast Buses

www.lothianbuses.com/news/2020/02/service-change-to-take-effect-from-sunday-29-march-2020/

Borders Buses

www.bordersbuses.co.uk/covid-19-important-information

Prentice

<http://www.prentice.info/alerts.html#servicestatus>

Stagecoach

www.stagecoachbus.com/coronavirus

City link

www.citylink.co.uk/serviceupdate_static.html



Trains on the Waverley line between Tweedbank and Edinburgh.

Down from half-hourly to hourly during the daytime

Later start in the morning, and much earlier finish in the evening with the last train departing Waverley now at 1924.

Any queries to ScotRail www.scotrail.co.uk/coronavirus-travel-information

Borders Railway

Trains will run on an hourly service. The first trains are:

- 06:21 hrs Edinburgh to Tweedbank
- 06:58 hrs Tweedbank to Edinburgh

The last trains are:

- 21:53 hrs Edinburgh to Tweedbank
- 20:29 hrs Tweedbank to Edinburgh

Before travelling and also services made be changed or removed please check all web sites before embarking on a journey. Ask yourself, **“Is it necessary?”**

Midlothian Council

Midlothian Council Care workers sought: In light of the coronavirus, Midlothian Council is looking to expand its social care workforce, particularly its Care at Home service. If you have previous care experience please get in touch with Linda Clark linda.clark@midlothian.gov.uk Evening and weekend work may also be available.



Midlothian

Accessible Homes – If Not Now, When ?

Early in 2020, the government published a consultation paper which set out a 'Vision' for how the housing system and market should work by 2040 and provide homes which meet people's needs. It is difficult to work out whether libraries would put this in their fiction or non-fiction sections. You can work it out for yourself - 'Housing to 2040 : a conversation'.

Any reading of the 16 pages which comprised this consultation paper quickly revealed that it is part of a 'conversation' in which reality rarely intruded. The paper offered a 'Vision' of what it describes as a 'well functioning housing system' and how it should look like by 2040. A nod was given to the importance of sustainability in the system [page 6], while sustainability in creating and sustaining communities also warranted a page. There is also a set of goals which are unironically described as 'Homes That Meet People's Needs'.

A taste of the criteria for this sub-set of the 'Vision' provided deep insight into the relationship between reality and the building blocks of this particular 'Vision'. The final bullet-point in this list under this heading reads :

- Self-build – When I built my own home, I found it easy to access advice and support for my self-build project and I was able to work on it myself. This means I have a home which is just right for me.

Forward Mid would find it difficult to imagine that the fundamental changes required across the entire housing system can be achieved in the next 20 years and deliver this kind of reality for disabled people. Forward Mid can confidently predict that the author of this element of the 'Vision' did not have in mind that a disabled person using a wheelchair would be enabled by 2040 as a result of this 'Vision' to fix the roof tiles in place on the roof of own their self-build home.

Forward Mid concluded that the 'Vision' set out in this consultation paper was so far removed from the complex realities of the dysfunctional housing systems and markets of today as to render it little more than a comprehensive wish list with little or no chance of becoming reality in 20 or even 50 years. This of course takes no account of the cultural, political and economic values which inform and shape today's housing systems and markets and which would require generations to achieve the kind of structural change required to come close to delivering the 'Vision' offered in this paper. The paper offered no indication of how it would overturn the decades of political change in housing policy which have evolved since the late 1970's to create the toxic cultural and societal outlook of 'home-ownership good, public sector rented bad'.



A panoramic view of Dumbiedykes in Edinburgh

For these reasons and more, Forward Mid considered the consultation to represent a serious

failure by government to tackle the multi-faceted and sustained failures of the current housing systems and markets and offered instead a 'Vision' which shared more with Disney than it does with Dumbiedykes. In light of this, Forward Mid confined its response to listing the actions needed to remedy current fundamental failures of the housing system and markets and challenge government to work now and over the next 5 years on these – all in equal partnership with disabled people :

Construct a cross-tenure map of current accessible housing provision across Scotland for disabled people

- Construct a map of the unmet housing needs of disabled people and their families
- Using these maps, provide ministers with powers to direct the provision of accessible homes – through the allocation of housing finance to local authorities and grants to private sector developers – to ensure unmet housing needs are fulfilled over the next 10 years
- Revise building standards and building regulations to ensure that all future housing provision [new build and modernisation of existing] are 'visitable' by disabled people and so bring an end to the hidden ghettoisation of disabled people in the housing market
- Set up a national advice and support housing agency which works with disabled people and their families with unmet housing needs to so that they are informed and empowered as to where across Scotland they can choose to have their housing and life needs most effectively met.

Forward Mid reckons dreaming and visions are all very well at 3.00 am but that in the cold light of the morning which starts the day for most people, the reality of life for a disabled person in an inaccessible home will always beg the question: 'If not now, when ?'

Good News



Forward Mid have been receiving reports of good neighbours. These neighbours are to be commended as this might be the only way vulnerable people can get food delivered to their door. They are delivering notes with a telephone contact that a help request can be answered. You can apply to be a volunteer for the NHS Lothian here: www.nhslothian.scot/GetInvolved/Volunteering/Pages/COVID--19-Application-Process.aspx

Scottish Commission for Learning Disability have included on their web site information for the most vulnerable and Easy Read to show how to stay safe in this current environment. Visit them at www.sclld.org.uk/tag/coronavirus/

A good book a great way to pas the time. Midlothian Libraries electronic books can be downloaded after you have joined at libraries.midlothian.gov.uk/web/arena/online-registration books and magazines are free to borrow and are recovered at end of lease. Story telling via video call is a great way to stay in touch.

Alternative Publications

Please like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/forwardmid/ 

Forward Mid newsletters are available in large print on request from Eric Johnstone ☎ : 0131-663-9471 or email 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. 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