



# **Physical Disability Planning Group Action Plan 2016 - 2019**

**Our Goal:-**

**All disabled people living in Midlothian have the same rights to freedom, choice, dignity and control as other citizens, at home, at work and in the community**

# Contents

Welcome to the action plan!

How was this plan created?

1. Education and Employment
2. Transport and Accessible Environment
3. Peer Support and Advocacy
4. Information and Communication
5. Self-Directed Support
6. Housing and Adaptations
7. Income and Welfare Reform
8. Health and Wellbeing

Group Members and Contact Details



Rights & Choices



working with carers

# Midlothian



**EQUALITY – FREEDOM – CHOICE – DIGNITY – CONTROL**

# Welcome to the action plan!

**Marlene Gill:** Member of **Forward Mid** (Midlothian's Disabled People's Forum) and Joint Physical Disability Planning Group.



Adapting to life as a wheelchair user is very challenging to say the least. I am, however, very keen to do what I can to influence the things which make my life challenging and make them better. By participating I can make sure the plan and the ongoing work reflect the real issues for disabled people living in Midlothian. It is very rewarding knowing that we can - and do - make a difference.

**Jayne Lewis:** Planning Officer Physical Disabilities, Midlothian Council

This Plan is really important to make sure the Joint Physical Disability Planning Group focus our work on the areas identified through public consultation, the issues which have been raised by those people living with or affected by physical disability.



And you...



It's our strong hope that this plan will activate aspiration and hope for disabled citizens. It is also an invitation to become part of what is happening, to get involved in one of the areas that you feel passionate about, whatever that may be. We encourage you to get in touch and together we can think about how that may be possible, how you may play a part in improving the lives of disabled people living in Midlothian.

**JOIN US!**

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## How was this plan created?

Members of **Forward MID** – Midlothian's Disabled People's Forum – designed and delivered all stages of this process, in partnership with Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership...

Forward MID –  
Midlothian's  
Disabled  
People's Forum

Disabled  
people,  
families and  
carers

Staff from  
Midlothian  
Council and NHS  
Lothian

Voluntary  
organisations  
and private  
service providers

**Towards a Good Life, Towards an Equal Life consultation 2015**



Opportunity for people to come together, say what is important to them and influence decisions, the strategy and action plan

This plan was developed from the issues and ideas people raised. We agreed...

We will work together to substantially improve the lives of disabled people in Midlothian

Our vision is:  
**Equality – Freedom- Choice**  
**– Dignity – Control**  
“A good life; an equal life”

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# 1. Education and Employment



## What people told us:

Transport and physical access difficulties create barriers

Help and support needs to be available at the time it is needed

## What do we want to achieve?

- ✓ More disabled people are able to take up their place in the workforce or in education
- ✓ Employers feel confident about recruiting disabled people
- ✓ Disabled people are supported to get a job or access education

## What are we going to do?



Create an information pack for employers



Promote good practice in employing disabled people



Develop Edinburgh College website to show the support they provide for disabled people



Make sure the Council's service to get people into employment or education meets the needs of disabled people



Promote the employability service for people with cancer



Make sure all Edinburgh College buildings are accessible

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## 2. Transport and Accessible Environment



### What people told us:

Availability of suitable types of taxi is an issue

Transport for Health appointments is difficult

### What do we want to achieve?

- ✓ Disabled people find it easy to get out and about independently and are confident about using public transport
- ✓ Disabled people have access to good information about transport options

### What are we going to do?



Improve information about parking at Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh



Create a taxi directory including vehicle types and capabilities



Promote disabled passenger assistance service



Ensure posters at train stations are up to date and in an accessible format



Encourage bus operators to adopt the Lothian Buses policy on wheelchairs and buggies



Improve the accessibility of bus stops



Arrange training for wheelchair users about using buses and trains

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### 3. Peer Support and Advocacy



#### What people told us:

There is concern for the future funding of groups

Co-production is really important and valued

#### What do we want to achieve?

- ✓ People know what peer support exists and what gaps there are
- ✓ People feel confident about developing their own peer support
- ✓ More people are “active citizens” – people who participate in community life

#### What are we going to do?



Hold a "word cafe" event to identify existing peer support



Make information about peer support widely available



Support disabled people to access peer support



Support people to develop new peer support

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## 4. Information and Communication



### What people told us:

Communication needs to be appropriate to the individual

Staff need training to make sure they can signpost effectively

### What do we want to achieve?

- ✓ Disabled people know about available services and opportunities including Forward MID and its role
- ✓ Up to date, accessible information is available for people in their local communities
- ✓ Disabled people, carers and professionals understand the issues that affect disabled people
- ✓ Disabled people and carers know about the physical disability planning group and how to influence it

### What are we going to do?



Print , launch and distribute widely the 2016 Directory for Disabled People



Produce 6 Forward MID newsletters each year, including information about Self Directed Support



Produce 1 transport special edition of the newsletter per year



Set up a communications group to improve communication between the Physical Disability Planning Group and the public

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## 5. Self-Directed Support



What people told us:

Individual budgets are quite tight

I'm not sure if the reality is there to be seen

What do we want to achieve?

- ✓ Disabled people have more choice and control over the support they receive
- ✓ Disabled people and carers have a clear understanding of selfdirected support, how it works and the benefits it can bring
- ✓ People are able to scrutinise and give feedback about Self-Directed Support

What are we going to do?



Set up a group to improve the delivery of Self-Directed Support



Coproduce a Self-Directed Support handbook for disabled service users



Publish articles in the Forward MID newsletter on each of the four Self Directed Support options

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## 6. Housing and Adaptations



### What people told us:

It's good that Council new builds are accessible but difficulties when dealing with older properties

There are delays in getting adaptations completed

### What do we want to achieve?

- ✓ More disabled people live in houses that meet their needs
- ✓ Disabled people plan ahead for their housing needs
- ✓ Disabled people are supported to move house when necessary
- ✓ New build houses meet the needs of local disabled people

### What are we going to do?



Make sure council houses are used appropriately by matching houses to people



Produce an information guide to support people to move house when necessary



Make sure Occupational Therapists continue to have input into new council housing



Develop and maintain a working relationship with housing and community planning

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## 7. Income and Welfare Reform



What people told us:

It's difficult to keep up with all the changes

How do we reach the people who need assistance?

What do we want to achieve?

- ✓ Disabled people receive the benefits to which they are entitled
- ✓ Disabled people are informed about changes to benefits and are supported through these changes
- ✓ Disabled people know how to get advice about money matters

What are we going to do?



Provide training to staff about welfare reform and income maximisation



Provide income maximisation and hardship support to people with disabilities



Plan ahead in order to be ready for any future changes to the benefits system

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## 8. Health and Wellbeing



What people told us:

What opportunities are out there?

GPs need to take a much more holistic approach

What do we want to achieve?

- ✓ Disabled people's health is improved
- ✓ Reduction of health inequalities – the unfair differences in people's health across social groups and communities
- ✓ It is easy to access accurate and up to date information about health and wellbeing and local support

What are we going to do?



Make sure health and wellbeing information is widely available - for example on websites and in the disabled people directory



Provide health and wellbeing services to people who are most likely to experience health inequalities



Provide services that promote health, prevent ill health and support people to self-manage health conditions

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## Group Members and Contact Details

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Anyone wishing to get involved, in whatever capacity, to help us achieve the stated goals and improve the lives of disabled people in Midlothian, please contact one of the above named people.

A full version of this action plan, can be found on [www.forwardmid.org.uk](http://www.forwardmid.org.uk); Alternatively contact Jayne on 0131 271 3665 or Eric on 0131 663 9471.

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