



Fife Independent Disability Network Newsletter

Spring
Edition
2011

Knowing our own strength

As definitions of disability become wider and more inclusive, Professor Peter Beresford argues that an increase in numbers should turn us from an easy target for cuts into a powerful lobby



A fierce but concealed political debate has been taking place about disability. This Government, (more so even than its predecessors) is determinedly challenging the nature and scale of disability in the UK. This issue has so far been presented in terms of welfare reform, but be clear that underpinning it are a whole set of hostile assumptions about disabled people.

The unstated message is twofold. First, we the Government don't believe that there are all these disabled people in the population. Numbers are inflated by a host of scroungers and fraudsters. Second, we will reduce these numbers by forcing people off support and disability and related benefits into employment, and by adopting methods for medically testing them that have more to do with our ideological objectives than with their health or impairment status.

It is notoriously difficult to calculate numbers of disabled people. But what we can say with some confidence is that the number of people with impairments – physical, sensory, intellectual – or related to mental health problems and other long term and end of life conditions, is large and rising. It is rising because of improvements in the survivability of infants and other people with impairments into older age, and because of the significant increase in older and very old people, the groups acknowledged to include the largest number of disabled people, it's likely that anything from a quarter to a third of the population are disabled.

So when politicians, like the current Coalition cabinet, pick on

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disabled people as a powerless and unimportant constituency, the reality is that it's going to be more and more difficult for them to maintain the discriminatory mindset that disabled people are a marginal minority that can't hit back. They are going to have to recognise the diversity of disabled people. There are going to be more and more of us around. Who knows, we may end up being the majority. Now there's food for thought!

But it is not only reactionary and disablist politicians who must internalize this reality. We must too as disabled people. We are a very large interest group and we have to see ourselves much more as such. It was the vital legacy of the disabled people's movement that it set us on this road.

Now, perhaps, at a time of an appalling increase in political oppression and discrimination, it's time for us to renew our thinking and determination about this. It's a reminder that we need to regain our confidence as a group and as a movement.

But, also, it is a reminder to government that they will need to think again if they decide to attack us and our rights and needs. The Condem coalition needs to remember that when it takes us on, it is now almost certainly taking on many households, most families and every street. We only have to remember that we have the growing power of numbers to change politics.

DisabilityNOW February 2011

FIDN need`s more Management Committee members

FIDN need more Management Committee members, would you like to be more involved in making decisions and becoming actively involved in disability issues. FIDN need more voices to raise awareness of the difficulties disabled people encounter.

Telephone Muriel for more information.

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400,000 could lose DLA, alliance claims Ian Macrae

Nearly half a million disabled people could lose their Disability Living Allowance according to a leading disability rights charity. Using direct analysis of Government figures published as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), Disability Alliance calculates that 400,000 people would be taken off the benefit by the implementation of new assessment procedures. In addition, the charity believes that thousands more would have to lose their entitlement to out of work benefits if Government savings targets of £2 billion are to be met. Meanwhile, other charities reacted negatively to announcements contained in the Government's Welfare Reform white paper published in November.



Richard Hawkes, Chief Executive of Scope (the charity which publishes Disability Now) said: "The fact remains that disabled people who are able to work, who want to work – are still unlikely to find work because there are so few jobs available. "This white paper does not address the state of the employment market today, nor take into consideration the reality of people's lives. "And worryingly, it plans to introduce a 'regime of sanctions for those that don't play by the rules'."

Chief Executive of mental health charity Rethink, Paul Jenkins, also expressed concern about the emphasis on getting people back to work and the means by which they'll be assessed. "The proposed conditions attached to Job Seeker's Allowance will add to the worries of those who already fear they will be wrongly assessed as fit to work under the new benefits test. "It is now even more essential that benefits assessments really reflect people's ability to work in the long-term. Mental illness affects people differently from day to day, and if someone is wrongly found to be fit for work, and put on Job Seeker's Allowance, they could now be forced to do inappropriate work or lose their benefits. Jobcentre Plus staff tell us that they don't have mental illness expertise, yet they will decide who to send on these work programmes."

David Congdon, Head of Campaigns and Policy at Mencap focused on the likely impact on people with learning difficulties of proposals to time limit unemployment benefits. "We are very concerned that punitive measures such as benefit withdrawal will adversely impact people with a learning disability. Failure to find employment does not necessarily reflect an 'unwillingness to cooperate', but is more likely to be as a result of employer prejudice and a lack of support. "On average it takes more than a year for someone with a learning disability to be 'work ready' and find employment. "There must be a more flexible and personalised approach to helping people into the job market rather than this one size fits all approach."

Strathallan Primary School Diversity Day

By Pauline Medd

Good morning everybody.

First could I apologise for being late, this is one thing about disability that people don't realise although I'm up at seven o'clock in the morning by the time my carers come in and help me to shower or wash, everything takes time so I can very rarely get to a meeting or an appointment before half-past 10 to 11 o'clock.

Could I ask who in the room either has somebody in the family who is disabled or knows somebody who is disabled?

If you could just put up your hand.

About six to eight children raised their hands out of each class. We had about four different classes.

I asked one of my carers if she could ask her grandchild (his name is Charlie he is six and quite a character) what would he say or do if he went to visit someone in a wheelchair, I was quite taken back by what he said----- he said I would ask if I could help them, or did they need something to eat and if the grandchildren were coming to play can I get the toys out, I have to say from a six year old that was amazing,

My name is Pauline Medd and I have been disabled for the past 33 years of my life. Two of my main disabilities are that I have MS, multiple sclerosis and I'm also diabetic.

I was 30 years old when I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis by that time I had had my three children and spent time abroad in Africa. And by the way one of my children is a Down's syndrome young man. One of my daughters went to university and became a civil engineer she has now gone on to become an associate partner and a consultant in a health and safety company. My other daughter has gone on to become a very good hairdresser is now a wife and mother with a nine-year-old girl called Katie and an 11-year-old called Emma. So as you can see although my children helping me when they were younger it didn't stop them from getting on with their lives in fact I think it made them stronger.

When I was younger my husband worked away a lot with his job so I did have to rely on my children a lot to do the various different jobs, I hope your children help out at home, but at the same time I was determined not to turn my children into little carers so by the time I felt I needed more help I managed to get home care to help clean the house and do the ironing, which is what used up most of my energy.

I have never let disability get in my way in 1994 I helped to setup Fife Independent Disability Network, which was 17 years ago. And that came about because not being able to get into places and not having proper disabled toilets frustrated me.

We have one member of the group, Jack who himself is deaf deals a lot with hearing systems and he's worked a lot with the NHS and Fife Council, trying to make sure everybody is involved with meetings conferences by having the correct hearing system in place, or even a loop system at a desk that actually works, because if you can't hear something that everybody else can hear then you are being excluded and that is not a equality.

We have another member James who works a lot with transport trying to sort out the problems with the buses and trains, as far as access is concerned. We are great believers that if it affects you then you're inclined to be more passionate about trying to sort the problem out.

Michael, who is our chairperson he gets more involved with legislation, that is the law and what is acceptable and what is not acceptable it is very important to know what you are entitled to. There's no point in various different governments passing laws if they're not going to adhere to them.

Robert, works on our website and newsletter the website is very successful we had 6995 hits in January and these are coming from all over the world I don't think there is a country that hasn't visited our website they have been as far away as Russia and South Africa.

Now myself, guess what I do kids, I'm the toilet lady, it's not that I clean them it's just that I know what they should look like. I always like to make sure that access is correct I get involved with schools and hospitals any new buildings any buildings that have been refurbished I like to make sure that the access and facilities are correct. I even looked over the plans for this school before it was built. So if there were any problems here I would love to know about them.

I'm working with Fife Council on the Access Awareness Group and the NHS Electric Wheelchair Group and the Disability Group. I'm also a Lay Assessor with the care commission. As you can see children just because I am in a wheelchair it doesn't mean to say I don't do anything, I don't do anything physically because I can't, but I do a lot of talking.

I started having to use a wheelchair 20 years ago a wheelchair is not a toy, it's my legs it's my way of walking about, that means I can go out and about like everybody else.

We have come a long way in 25 years with a level access into buildings and having disabled toilets because 25 years ago when my disability started to affect me I wasn't able to go to the places that everybody else could go.

It meant not being able to go to the same shops, restaurants, hotels, holidays, dentist, doctor, places of worship that your friend's family want go to. The Bible says come ye all unto me, but how you can when you can't get in the building because of stairs and that unfortunately was the case at most places.

You children have a beautiful new school here but when my children went to school I could not go to parents day, or the

Continued on page 6

school concert because it was up stairs, have you any idea how it felt telling your children that you couldn't go and watch the concert or they would need to go to the dentist or the doctors on their own it's not a nice feeling as a parent to have to do that to your children.

Now you know why I am passionate about access

And now children it's over to you, you can ask any question you like and I will answer you.

Questions that the children asked-----

“ Did you look at the plans when this was just a field”

“ How do you get to the toilet”?

“ My granddad walks with one of those metal things”

“ What would you do without Julie to help you”?

“ My granddad has a hearing aid”

“ My granddad only has one leg he is in a wheelchair”

“ One child was anxious that she wasn't going to be able to go to Balwearie School like every body else in her class.

TAXI CENTRAL Ltd—New text booking service available

Safe reliable & secure

Vehicle Make, Model & Registration texted to your phone when car on the way, also on arrival

Track your taxi's progress on your phone

For free registration and details log on to

Www.taxicentral.co.uk/textbooker

01592-203040

Fife Fire and Rescue Service offer

Fife Fire and Rescue Service offer a free home fire safety to all householders in Fife who request a visit. These visits include valuable advice on the prevention of fire, the detection of fire should it occur and the formulation of an escape plan for all occupants of the household. This coupled with the free supply and fitting of smoke detectors provides reassurance to all those visited that they themselves can dramatically improve safety of themselves and their family.

If you would like a free home safety check please call Freephone. 0808 100 3141

Scope launches online forum for young disabled people

The charity already hosts a number of active forums on its site primarily geared towards parents of disabled children and disabled adults. This forum will be the first aimed at young disabled people aged between 10 and 18 years.

The forum was established in response to an increase in the number of calls the charity's free information and advice helpline, Scope Response, had been receiving about young disabled people who are feeling isolated, different and misunderstood. Jacqui Piper, co-ordinator at Scope, said:

"Many teenagers find it difficult to talk to their parents about their feelings and disabled teenagers are no different. Increasingly we're hearing about young disabled people who feel frustrated and angry at being misunderstood. We wanted to create a safe space for them to come together, to share their experiences, find information and talk through issues they are experiencing with their peers."

About Meeting Point, Jhon Bateman, aged 13 said: "I think it will be good as it's an instant way of communicating with other people of a similar age. Even if you're ill because of your disability you would still be able to talk to people."

For more information, please contact Amisha Korla in the Scope press office on 020 7619 7200 or email amisha.korla@scope.org.uk

Meeting Point can be found www.scope.org.uk/meetingpoint

It is a closed forum that requires registration and parental consent.

<http://www.scope.org.uk/news/meeting-point>

Wise Group Consider Legal Challenge to Work Programme Snub

UK Ministers could face a legal challenge, following criticism earlier this week of Employment Minister, Chris Grayling, after the leading Scottish Charity the Wise Group missed out on a multimillion-pound Government contract to a firm led by one of his department's former top officials.

Grayling was grilled earlier this week at a jobs summit in Edinburgh where social enterprises, most notably the Wise Group, questioned the Minister. The Wise Group had been expected to take on the new Work Programme contract, but were shunned in favour of two major corporate firms, Ingeus and Working Links. Former Labour MSP Des McNulty, who sits on the board of the Wise Group, expressed his regret at the decision and issued a warning that legal action could be imminent;

'It cannot be legal to award a contract to an organisation that doesn't meet the published tender...I believe the inconsistencies are sufficiently serious to require a rerun of the tender'

Martin Sime, chief executive of the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations has also been outspoken on the decision commenting;

'This whole process has been a travesty for the big society,' 'But at least we now know what the big society really means. It means the third sector gets the crumbs off the table left by big business.'

MS Society “Fife Branch Meetings”

For the last year groups have been meeting over lunch for a chat and get together. These groups are open to people diagnosed with MS their family and friends. They meet in the following areas:-

Dunfermline

WHERE: 1st Tuesday of every month, 12 for 12:30pm

The Woodmill Inn, Dunfermline

3rd Tuesday of every month, 12 for 12:30pm

Various Locations

WHO: Mixed Group

WHAT: Lunch or Coffee and a Chat

CONTACT: Kevin 01383 852708

CENTRAL GROUP

WHERE: Gilvenbank, Glenrothes, 12 for 12:30pm

WHEN: 2nd Wednesday of the month

WHO: Mixed group

WHAT: Lunch or Coffee and a Chat

CONTACT: Ann 07709 071331

GLENROTHES

WHERE: Forward Centre, Glenrothes

WHEN: Every Friday Evening at 6pm

WHO: Mixed Group

WHAT: Coffee and a Chat

CONTACT: MS Fife Branch 07733 616770

LEVENMOUTH

WHERE: Blacketyside Tea Room, Leven, 12 for 12:30pm

WHEN: 3rd Thursday of the month

WHO: Mixed Group

WHAT: Lunch or Coffee and a Chat

CONTACT: Liz on 01333 352672

ST ANDREWS

WHERE: Scooniehill Lounge, 12 for 12:30pm

WHEN: 1st Friday of the month

WHO: Mixed Group

WHAT: Lunch, Speakers, Outings

CONTACT: David on 01382 330627

For information or advice on any of these groups please contact Volunteer Coordinator Liz on 01333 352672

Aspirin Info

Disclaimer: The below information are not the FIDN's findings but Dr. Virend Somers and have added for your information only.

Aspirin Info

To add to your body of knowledge:

Dr. Virend Somers, a cardiologist from the Mayo Clinic who is lead author of the report in the July 29, 2008 issue of the Journal of the American College of Cardiology.

Most heart attacks occur in the day, generally between 6 A.M. and noon, Somers said. Having one during the night, when the heart should be most at rest, means that something unusual happened. Somers and his colleagues have been working for a decade to show that sleep apnea is to blame.

If you take an aspirin or a baby aspirin once a day, take it at night. The reason: aspirin has a 24-hour "half-life".

Therefore, if most heart attacks happen in the wee hours of the morning, the aspirin would be strongest in your system.

FYI, aspirin lasts a really long time in your medicine chest.....years. (when it gets old, it smells like vinegar.)please read on.

Something that we can do to help ourselves. Nice to know.

Bayer is making crystal aspirin to dissolve instantly on the tongue. They work much faster than the tablets.

Why keep aspirin by your bedside?

About Heart Attacks

There are other symptoms of an heart attack besides *the pain on the left arm*. One must also be aware of *an intense pain on the chin*, as well as *nausea* and lots of *sweating*, however these symptoms may also occur less frequently.

Note: There may be NO pain in the chest during a heart attack.

The majority of people (about 60%) who had a heart attack during their sleep did not wake up. However, if it occurs, the chest pain may wake you up from your deep sleep.

If that happens, immediately dissolve **two aspirins** in your mouth and swallow them with a bit of water.

Afterwards:

- call 999
- phone a neighbour or a family member who lives very close by
- say "heart attack!"

-say that you have taken 2 aspirins.

- take a seat on a chair or sofa near the front door, and wait for their arrival and...

Do NOT lie down

A Cardiologist has stated that, if each person, after receiving this e-mail, sends it to 10 people, probably one life can be saved!

I have already shared the information- - What about you?

Do forward this message; it may save lives!

Report by Pauline Medd, what can be achieved through good practice.

I have been having great difficulty getting into my dental practice that I had been going to for a long time now, due to no-fault of their own it is in an old building and doesn't have a disabled toilet etc I have to reverse into the room and I can barely get the door closed behind me, my dentist has also gone into semi retirement.

On the 4th March 2011 I attended the NHS disability group, I brought up the subject about the new dental practice at Glenwood in Glenrothes due to open in June July. I was involved with the consultation of the dental practice at the planning stage so I knew that the disabled access and facilities would be or should be good, I have yet to check it out. While I was at the meeting I asked who would be the best person to speak to about being put on the waiting list. So over the weekend I sent an e-mail to the lady in question, she e-mailed me back asking for my phone number she then phoned straight back turned out the lady used to do Christopher's teeth years ago, and knew that I had medical problems as well.

The upshot is Christopher and I are going to be put on the list of a lady who specialises in people with health problems. I have already met her through Christopher getting teeth out recently and to make it easier for my husband who will probably have to drive us there he is also going to be put on the list of another person to make it more convenient and easier for ourselves, in the lady's words (life is difficult enough for you lets try and make it easier).

As anybody knows me I'm a great complainer oops meant to say campaigner when it comes to the needs of disabled people and I do believe in trying to get it right, so when people go out of their way to help then all I can say is hats off to them and thank you for doing their job right, it makes life an awful lot easier if people have empathy and understanding, so all praise to Fife's NHS dental Department, and the lady in question deserves to be in the position that she is in.

With regards

Pauline Medd (Fife Independent Disability Network)

The website we have been developing might be of interest to you and your visitors:
www.counselling-directory.org.uk

The purpose of the site is ultimately to provide the UK with a huge counselling support network, enabling those in distress to find a counsellor close to them and appropriate for their needs. This is a free, confidential service that will hopefully encourage those in distress to seek help. The website also contains a number of sections on emotional disorders (types of distress section) and provides some useful statistics. Every counsellor on the site who has submitted their profile has either sent a copy of their qualifications and insurance cover to us, or is registered with a professional body online with recognised codes of ethics and practice, this way we can be assured of their professionalism.

I think our site could be a useful resource for those looking for support or general advice about counselling. Jennifer Froggatt

Email: jennifer@counselling-directory.org.uk

Website: www.counselling-directory.org.uk

Telephone: 0844 8030 234



**Locked out
of the Disabled Toilet?
use a RADAR key**



How do I get one?

- Visit FIDN with identification (e.g. Blue Badge). If it's easier simply post a cheque along with a photocopy of both sides of your Blue Badge and we'll send your key directly.

Is It only for wheelchair users? NO

- Speak to us for clarification, but you are entitled to use a Radar accessible toilet if you require assistance in toileting, have a visual impairment etc.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Inclusion Scotland

Tel 0141 887 7058

Info@inclusionscotland.org

Fife Advocacy

Tel: 01383 511155

enquiries@fifeadvocacy.org

**Scottish Disability Equality
Forum**

Tel: 01786 446456

general@sdef.org.uk

Citizens Advice & Rights Fife

Tel: 0845 1400 095

www.cas.org.uk/

NHS/Fife Health Council

Tel: 0800 587 4008

www.scottishhealthcouncil.org

**Equality & Human Rights
Commission**

Tel: 0845 604 5510

scotland@equalityhumanrights.com

FIDN OFFICE CONTACT DETAILS:

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Fax: 01592 203786

Mobile (SMS Text): 07841504318

Email: enquiries@fidn.co.uk

Website: www.fidn.co.uk

**Please visit the websites for more
Information.**

**If you have any relevant
information you like to share,
please contact the Office.**

Scottish Charity No: SC 026112

THE BELOW ARE SOME USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS RELATED TO SAFETY

Homecheck

Tel: 01592 599599

Fife Fire and Rescue Service

Tel: 01333 439497

**Fife Constabulary Home
Security Help / Advice**

Tel: 01592 418506

**Fife Constabulary
Safety Officer (East)**

Tel: 01334 418745

Consumer Direct

Tel: 08454 04 05 06

Citizens Advice & Rights Fife

Tel: 01334 412845

Energy Saving Trust

Tel: 0800 512 012

Care and Repair

Tel: 01592 631661

Fife Police Non-emergency

Tel: 0845 600 5702

All Articles are presumed to be correct, but the Fife Independent Disability Network takes no responsibility for any inaccuracy's of Articles in this newsletter. The views expressed in these articles are not necessary the views of Fife Independent Disability Network

TIME FOR THE TRUTH

IT came, it saw, it reported. For the last two years, the Poverty Truth Commission (PTC) has brought together people who exercise power and influence in Scottish society and people who live every day with the struggle against poverty.

Last Saturday, members of the commission explored and discussed what they have learned and what they believe needs to happen in order to address issues of poverty and marginalisation in Scottish society. “Nothing about us

without us is for us” has been the mantra for the commission’s work, and this is set to provide the benchmark for future action.



The commission is a novel idea loosely based on the truth and reconciliation commissions held in post apartheid South Africa. It is sponsored by the Church of Scotland Priority Areas group, along with Faith in Community (a multi-faith organisation which seeks to keep the issue of poverty on Scotland’s political agenda). For the past two years, disadvantaged people from Glasgow have been telling commissioners what it’s like to be poor in a land of plenty.

But how much has it actually achieved in the two years since it has been operating?

Jim Wallace, former deputy first minister under the McConnell reign, who is a commissioner, told TFN that the whole experience was different from other approaches to poverty, because it made it a priority to place those experiencing poverty at the forefront of solutions to address it.

“It’s unique in that respect,” he said. “Giving people a voice who would not normally have one is hugely powerful. It has made us listen and has empowered them. Before we talked about how to help people without involving them. Now they talk about helping themselves and what needs to be done to assist that. We’re just here to facilitate it all.”

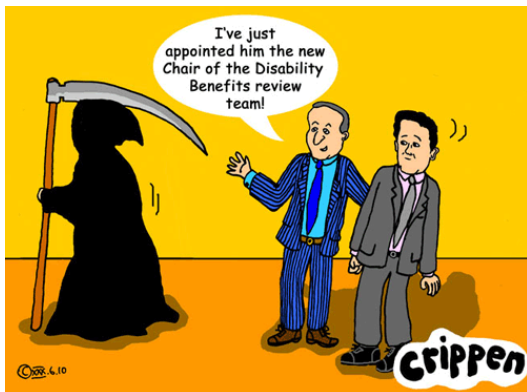
Mr Wallace said his involvement with the commission had been “a revelation”. He added: “Not least, I came to appreciate just how disempowered people can feel with experts, officials and politicians talking about their plight but without any real reference to the people they’re talking about. “Through the commission I have become convinced that we are more likely to identify solutions to some deep-seated problems if politicians and officials involve those who experience the reality of poverty in their daily lives. “That is the challenge to policymakers and those who deliver public services at every level of government.”

After two years, the commission has created a report of its discoveries. Mindful that it could be seen as just another talking shop, the recommendations look to build on the evidence it has heard from people living in poverty over the last two years. Because, it states, despite hundreds of other reports and government strategies, poverty continues to worsen in Scotland.

One recommendation is that civil servants could be sent to stay in some of country's most deprived neighbourhoods to experience the reality of those living with little money. The idea is that decision makers would be brought closer to poverty and its effect on communities in a fresh approach to tackling spiralling deprivation and the gap between rich and poor in the form of a new mentoring scheme. Scottish Government workers would forge a direct relationship with those living at the sharp end of poverty, with hopes that they will spend time on the home turf of their project partners.

Commissioner Donna Barrowcliffe, a community worker from Ruchazie in Glasgow, called the process "revolutionary". She said: "We need to keep letting people in power know that it's worth their while to listen to us – because not only will our ideas on poverty be better than anything they come up with at their desks, but because we need to be recognised as equal human beings."

The Rev Dr Martin Johnstone, secretary to the commission, said: "One of the ongoing things that people have said over and over again is that the real experts on understanding the issues of poverty are the people who experience it. The rest of us can be incredibly well-intentioned but much better policy will be made if we are drawing on the wisdom of those who are experiencing it. "In so many walks of life we ask the experts. In this environment, what we say is that the experts are those who live in poverty."



Johnstone said the details of the mentoring scheme have yet to be finalised, adding: "Certainly, from the commission's points of view, we would recognise that the idea would be that the civil servant would be learning directly with people in their communities. "In the Church of Scotland, for example, we recognise the huge value over the years of taking meetings out of the church offices and holding them in the heart of local communities.

It totally changes the dynamic."

He added that there had been an enthusiastic response from civil servants so far.

Fahima Mass, who attended the event in a personal capacity, said the whole process of the PTC was worth it because it proved decision makers were listening to those who felt excluded through poverty.

"I think more than anything it gives hope to people who have no voice or feel they can't make the changes necessary to help them. "We live in a democracy yet so many of us do not have a say. That's why this has been so important. People have been allowed to speak, people have listened, now it is up to others to act on what they have heard."

Thirdforcenews — April 21, 2011

Help just one call away for victims

WORK to protect adults at risk of harm in Fife continues to go from strength to strength. This month sees the launch of the Adult Protection Phone Line - 01383 602200 - which you can call, if you, or someone you know is being harmed or neglected.



John Myles and Grace Adamson

The Adult Protection Committee consists of a partnership between Fife Council Social Work Service, Fife Constabulary and NHS Fife. These organizations and others, work together to support and protect adults at risk of harm in Fife, enabling them to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives within their community.

Gwen Adamson uses Social Work services, and is also a member of advocacy group 'People First'. She explained why it's so important to speak out, "Don't let anyone harm you. It's important to feel safe. You have to speak up and get help. Harm is wrong. "If you need help to speak up for yourself, advocacy groups like People First can help you. If you phone the Adult Protection Phone Line, someone will listen to you, and get you help to keep safe and stop harm from happening to you."

John Myles, independent chair of the adult protection committee, said, "Supporting and protecting adults at risk of harm, is extremely . important. Harm can encompass neglect, financial harm and self harm, as well as physical, emotional, and sexual harm.

"Being older, or having a disability does not automatically make you a person at higher risk of harm. Often it's the situation that you find yourself in. Most adults in Fife who are disabled, ill or elderly, live comfortable, safe and secure lives - either living independently, or with support from relatives, friends, professionals or volunteers. "However, some people might find it more difficult to stop harm happening to them. If you can't protect yourself from being harmed, it is important to tell someone. If someone harms you and says 'Don't tell anyone' they are wrong you **MUST** tell someone.

"Fife has a great community spirit, and it's vital that we encourage the public to speak up, and act against harm if they are worried about someone. Everyone has the right to be safe. The new Phone Line is a vital step forward, making it easier for people to report their concerns. Calling the new number will ensure that people at risk of harm get help, and receive support and protection."

If you're worried because you or someone you know is being harmed or neglected, call the Adult Protection Phone Line on 01383602200. New Adult

Protection leaflets and posters will be available in Local Services Centres, Social Work Offices, GP surgeries, pharmacies, opticians, libraries - in many public buildings across Fife. Information IS also downloadable from our website: <http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/adultprotection>

From Central Fife Times April 7, 2011



What is IA?

IA is a national support group for people with ileostomies and internal pouches.

- Listen
- Inform
- Support

Established in 1956 as the Ileostomy Association by a group of people with ileostomies and some members of the medical profession, the organisation now has 54 member organisations in the UK and Ireland. These local groups are: managed by volunteers, most of whom have an Ileostomy or internal pouch.

<p><u>Ileostomy</u> Certain Inflammatory bowel diseases such as ulcerative colitis or Crohn’s disease, sometimes cause such damage to the large intestine (colon) that it becomes necessary for this to be removed. The lower end of the small intestine which is called the ileum is then brought out through the abdominal wall, forming an Ileostomy, so that bodily waste matter can be collected in an externally attached bag.</p> <p><u>Ileo anal pouch</u> With the advances in modern surgical techniques some people now have an internal pouch formed. This surgery involves removing the colon and rectum and a reservoir (pouch) is constructed from small intestine. A temporary Ileostomy may be necessary whilst healing of the pouch takes place.</p>	<p><u>Temporary Ileostomy</u> This is often referred to as a ‘loop’ Ileostomy, as it is formed by bringing a loop of small intestine out onto the abdominal wall. A temporary Ileostomy may be formed to enable an Ileo-anal pouch to heal, or to allow a join between two ends of large intestine to heal, when a section of intestine has been removed, most commonly for bowel cancer.</p> <p><u>What does IA do?</u> Listen-Inform-Support Although major surgery of this nature, with a change of bodily function, will disrupt a person’s lifestyle, especially if the illness has lasted for many years, recovery will often be assisted by contact with people who have been through a similar experience.</p>	<p>The following core activities are provided by IA for people of all ages with an Ileostomy or internal pouch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting • Members’ meetings • IA Journal • Website • Young IA • Internal Pouch • Advisory services • Medical research <p>IA’s core objectives are to help those facing these operations to return to a normal active lifestyle as soon as possible after surgery. IA is totally funded by donations and subscriptions and most of the 10,000 members have either an Ileostomy or an internal pouch, allowing us to use the ‘because we know, we care’ strapline with confidence.</p>
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My name is **Betty McNeil** and I am secretary of the Fife IA Support Group. We meet three times a year at The Staff Club, Victoria Hospital, Kirkcaldy. Our members consist of people who have ileostomies, pouches, colostomies and urostomies. We also have members who are family or friends of our ostomists and come along to support them. Our meetings are very informal and friendly with lots of talk and discussions. Everyone is welcome.

If you wish to find out more about the Fife IA group please contact me at the address, telephone or e-mail below. I will be more than willing to help with information or support.

Mrs B McNeil
117 Primrose Avenue
Rosyth Fife KY11 2TX
Telephone 01383 416320

E mail betty.mcneil@talktalk.net

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**Photo`s taken at the Network Meeting, 3rd March 2011
In The Balmullo Village Hall (near Cupar)**

**Some of the FIDN
Members and members
of the public in
attendance**



**Guest Speaker:
George Davidson,
Interactions Counselling
& Support Services**

**Guest Speaker:
Janet Walton
Pyramid Community Care
Services**



Axed fund threatens independent lives

It's the news thousands have been anticipating with less than excitement: that within five years, the fund which has kept them out of residential care will be no more.

Sunil Peck reports

The Government has finally confirmed that it's to scrap the Independent Living Fund (ILF). Users have described the news as a disaster and say that it has the potential to set the lives of disabled people back decades. The fund was set up in 1988 and now provides money paid by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to more than 20,000 disabled people with high support needs to live independently at home, thereby keeping them out of residential care.

But the Minister for Disabled People Maria Miller announced in December last year that the fund would close by 2015 because it's "financially unsustainable". But she has so far failed to explain what will replace the fund or how existing users and those disabled people who were prevented from benefitting when the fund was closed to new applications in 2010, would be in a position to continue to exercise any choice or control over their lives after 2015.

Is it really conceivable, for instance, that cash-strapped local authorities, whose budgets are already being hit by other Government spending cuts, will be in a position to meet the higher costs of care and support packages?

The ILF makes up around fifty per cent of Martyn Sibley's care package. For eight years it has enabled him to employ personal assistants so he can do things like turn over in the night, dress, cook, clean his flat and socialise with his friends.

Not surprisingly, he's "scared" that the abolition of the ILF will take away his independence and his career. As he told Disability Now: "The crux of the matter is if I can't find anyone to do my care for the amount of money in the coffers. I'd have to give up my job and move back home and rely on friends and family instead."

As another user of the fund, Sian Vasey, puts it: "If you need help with getting up, going to bed and preparing and eating food, you have to be able to pay people. Very few disabled people have people who can do that work for nothing; it's ongoing and regular labour that's needed."

Sian is also Director of the Ealing Centre for Independent Living (ECIL), and says that her local council in west London will see a 28 per cent reduction in funding from the Government. But it's making cuts worth 35 per cent to social services which, as she points out, suggests that the services which disabled people rely on are being targeted by the council to make further local savings. "It's a complete and absolute disaster. If it isn't replaced like for like it'll take the lives of disabled people back to the days when nobody had any support and you ended up in a Leonard Cheshire home."

Maria Miller says that safeguarding the position of existing recipients of the ILF is a priority. Following the publication of a report into the funding of the social care system later this year, the Government will carry out a formal consultation, which will inform decisions on determining how best to continue to support existing users of the ILF into a social care system based on the principles of personalised budgets.

DisabilityNOW February 2011



Guest Speaker:
Janet Walton
Pyramid Community Care
Services

Guest Speaker:
George Davidson,
Interactions Counselling



**Videos of the Guest Speakers can be viewed on the FIDN website;
www.fidn.co.uk follow the Video or Gallery links on the Home Page.**

Please Send in Letters or comment's that may be of interest to FIDN readers to the FIDN office (address on page 12). Please state for Newsletter!
Please note that this is no guarantee that it will be place in the newsletter.

FIDN Website

Only FIDN Member's now get the new editions of the FIDN newsletters but previous editions of the newsletters plus lots more information can be viewed on our website.
www.fidn.co.uk

Kirkcaldy Walking and Cycling Project – Update 1st April 2011

I am the Project Co-ordinator for this partnership project between Fife Council (Transportation Services) and Sustrans (with funding from the Scottish Government). The aim of the project is to increase levels of walking and cycling, including to access public transport, in Kirkcaldy.

This update is being sent to those who were invited to a workshop about the project in November 2010, and others who have been involved in the project in some way. The workshop in November generated lots of good ideas, and since then the project team, including staff from both Sustrans and Fife Council Transportation Services, have continued to work on ways to encourage more people to walk and cycle.

Some of the work on the ground can already be seen including the improved walking and cycling routes on Oriel Road and Dunnikier Way, and other similar projects are in the planning stages.

In November, Sustrans also appointed a new member of staff to work with a specific local community in Templehall, to involve people in the re-design of their street to meet their needs.

Events

We are now planning a public launch of the project in May and a **launch event** will be held on **Saturday May 21st** from 10.00 onwards in Kirkcaldy Town Square. This fun day for all ages will include a chance for people to try out different kinds of bikes, watch an exciting stunt display by The Clan, and find out more about walking, cycling and public transport use in the town. The project will also be promoted at the Beveridge Park Community Festival (2nd and 3rd July), with opportunities for people of all ages to try cycling and find out more about the project.

Led Cycle Rides

We're also hoping to hold a series of led cycle rides, as part of a Fife-wide initiative, to encourage new or less experienced cyclists to enjoy cycling in Kirkcaldy. These rides will be led by volunteers, and already across Fife more than 15 volunteers have been trained for this. It would be great to have more volunteers involved in Kirkcaldy, and I would be pleased to hear from anyone who is interested, or who has ideas about recruiting volunteers.

These events, and others being planned for the summer, will also give people in Kirkcaldy a chance to tell us what kind of things would encourage them to walk and cycle more often. We would especially like as many people as possible to come along to the event on May 21st and we'll be doing lots more promotion in the run-up. If you would like any more information about this, or any other aspect of the project please get in touch.

Michael Nimmo Project Co-ordinator, Kirkcaldy Walking and Cycling Initiative
Fife Council & Sustrans, Telephone: 08451 555555 ext 477009
Mobile: 07824 628491
michael.nimmo@fife.gov.uk

Fife Employability Network closes

FenLink will finish today so, if you or your clients are looking for a contact for information and advice for people with disabilities (or the other equality strands) please phone Citizens Advice and Rights Fife (CARF) on 0845 1400 095 and they will signpost you. If you know you're looking for Fife EmployAbility Team, the number is 01592 583142.

There's a 2011 Directory online at www.fifedirect.org.uk/fenlink. I've sent a copy to Fife Rights Forum who will be in touch at some point to ask if you would like to be included in the FRF Directory (if you're not already there). If you're not in the FRF Directory, I suggest you get in touch and sign up.

The short life working group that has been looking at establishing a new employability equality network has put together some recommendations. The recommendations for the directory and the helpline are what's detailed in this email and it's hoped that the Equalities Participation Network (EPN) will discuss the new network at an EPN event. If you haven't registered with the EPN, could I suggest that you do so (forms attached). It's a good way to make sure that the information FEN has distributed gets round and lets you send round information about your agency.

Hopefully, I haven't forgotten any of the arrangements. I'd like to thank you for all the support and help you've given FEN over the years. Without the network agencies, we wouldn't have had a network. It's been great working with you and I've found your help invaluable.

Many thanks and all the best for the future.

Sandra Wilson

Development Co-ordinator, Fife Employability Network

Tel: 01592 583378

Email: info@fenlink.org.uk

Website: www.fifedirect.org.uk/fenlink



Class 3 Scooters (invalid carriage) must be by Law Road Taxed

Recently while I have been out and about on my scooter I have met with and talked to others who were out on theirs, a question that sometimes comes up is, "can your scooter do more than 4 miles per hour and if so do you know that by law it must be roads taxed", in some cases these people do not know this and this is not always their fault they tell me that the shop they bought it from did not tell them (In my case when I bought my scooter I was told by the shop).

To road tax your class 3 scooter (invalid carriage) does not even cost you anything, it's free. A class 3 scooter is by law classified as an invalid carriage and is exempt from the road tax fee.

If you don't tax or SORN your vehicle. You could face an automatic penalty of £80 as well as a minimum fine of £1000.

You may think but I only use it on the pavement and set at no more than 4 mph, well it does not matter if you even have it set at 1 mph a class 3 has the capability of doing 8 mph (though if the motor its self has been limited to 4 mph or under I don't now about that, that might make a difference).

By Robert a Hunter

If Only I'd Known that A Year Ago 2011

An information-packed guide to the services, welfare rights and facilities to help people living with ill-health, injury or disability participate fully in every aspect of life. Written by and for people affected by ill health, injury and disability, this book presents many opportunities to negotiate for change to give choice and control back to your life and work as a partner, a parent, a friend and an active member of your community.



This book signposts to valuable support and specialist information on Independent Living including equipment, housing, community care, Information Technology and carers. The Times of Your Life from childhood to later years covering education and skills, relationships and life events. A chapter on employment and support covering work, careers and benefits. A Rights and Justice area covering discrimination, reporting disability hate crime, legal and consumer services, advocacy and decision making. A Travel and Leisure section with specialist information on motoring, public transport, holidays, public toilets and potential leisure activities. Finally a chapter on health covering health services, mental health and wellbeing.

RADAR: 12 City Forum, 250 City Road, London, EC1V 8AF.

By phone: 020 7250 3222 - **By fax:** 020 7250 0212 - **By minicom:** 020 7250 4119 - **By email:** radar@radar.org.uk

"Cuts kill" drives protest agenda

It's not every day a new protest group takes to the streets, but with disabled people feeling unfairly targeted and hardest hit by Government spending cuts, Eleanor Lisney tells us why it's once more time for action.

Disabled People Against Cuts (DPAC) has been formed to campaign against the onslaught of coalition Government cuts affecting disabled peoples' right to live independently.

The co-founders of DPAC organised a leading role for disabled people in the mass rally against the June spending cuts which took place during the Conservative conference in Birmingham. Our message to politicians is that "cuts kill" and we already know of disabled people who have committed suicide because they were so scared about losing their care and support packages. There are three elements to our strategy, the first of which is taking to the streets in protest. Although we staged a DPAC demo in Westminster which took place while the results of the spending review were being announced in Parliament, we feel that the campaign will be far more effective in the long-run if it's waged in alliance with other grassroots organisations that are also campaigning against the cuts.

As well as joining protests in Birmingham during October and November, we joined a demo in Hyde Park organised by the campaigning network Mad Pride.

Our next big rally is the TUC rally in March 2011 and we are doing all we can to secure funding to cover the access needs of disabled people interested in joining us. The second element of our strategy is encouraging disabled people to write to their MPs to urge them to support an Early Day Motion, 706, which draws attention to the social exclusion and poverty the spending cuts will exacerbate among disabled people.

We are also using Facebook and Twitter to engage disabled people and have also set up an online protest page for people unable to attend rallies.

It's still too early to have any idea about how effective our campaign has been so far or what we will achieve and we are still reeling from the savage cuts announced in the spending review. But we are gaining support among disabled people in the UK, several European countries, the U.S. and Malaysia.

If we do not campaign we will be failing those disability activists who fought for the rights we now have and future generations of disabled people. To give up without a fight would be a betrayal. •• For more information visit disabledpeopleprotest.wordpress.com or contact Linda Burnip, a co-founder of DPAC on 07714 927533 or visit the DPAC Facebook group at <http://www.facebook.com/?ref=home#!/group.php?gid=121196194603310>

- Eleanor Lisney is a co-founder of DPAC and was talking to Sunil Peck

From www.disabilitynow.org.uk 26/01/2011

Why the disabled vote is crucial in May

Co-production is the right direction for services

“If you are cutting budgets, how can people live independently and have their full human rights?” is just one of the realistic questions posed to a panel of experienced politicians who addressed Glasgow Disability Alliance’s (GDA) Hustings meeting last week.



Tressa Burke
Director GDA

The answer is co-production but we need to have an honest dialogue about barriers and solutions for getting it right in housing, social work, health and education services. That dialogue needs to happen with politicians as well as with public servants as cultural change is going to be just as important as the size of the budgets invested. That dialogue depends on politicians understanding the issue and taking it up.

There are one million disabled people in Scotland and over 100,000 in Glasgow. Disabled people are parents, children, tenants, students, brothers, sisters, partners and friends. We are your neighbours, your colleagues – and maybe you, now or sometime in the future. Winning the votes of disabled people is no longer a marginal issue, rather it can influence the outcome of elections in both marginal and safe seats.



Disabled people have political views, not least because of the way the cuts will affect them: priorities in relation to spending will radically impact on how people live their lives, from assistance required to wash, dress and go the toilet in the home to accessing learning

opportunities in the community, working and even being socially and politically active.

But too often, disabled people’s lives are blighted by poverty and discrimination. There is no excuse for this in our still wealthy country. Disabled people are frequently denied appropriate personal support and services and this in turn prevents them from participating fully in economic, social, political and cultural life.

“There are hidden costs involved when you’re a disabled person. Poverty limits my choices on top of lack of access. It’s layers and layers of problems from my house to not having transport to the fact that I can’t take part in jury service as there’s no communication support which I need as I have a hearing impairment,” said one GDA member.

Disabled people want action so that they notice the difference next month, not next year. They need access to services and a decent income. The issues are local, such as accessible pavements, and they are national, such as the institutional discrimination that prevents disabled people being recruited by employers in the public, voluntary and private sectors. Many disabled people cannot get a job and so

benefits are their only income. So, abolishing and reducing national welfare including benefits has a huge impact on their lives as well as on devolved services such as health and social work.

Public services impact on the everyday lives of disabled people but frequently do not meet our everyday needs. It is our belief that co-production could be a solution to fix this problem as it recognises the resources that individuals already have, and delivers services with, rather than for, disabled people their families and their neighbours. The Independent Living Movement has campaigned for disabled people to achieve choice, control, dignity, freedom and a fair and equal chance at living a full life, so co-production is the logical way to meet the demands in the delivery of public services.

Too often people are spoken at rather than listened to. This is a corporate culture that needs to change and it is actually cheaper to listen and learn than focus on fitting square pegs into round holes. And of course human beings will be happier. Just one example is that it is cheaper to support disabled people in their own homes in a proactive way than to wait until people become more ill and have to admit them to hospital in periods of personal crisis: this is reactive and costs more money.

However our home is not a prison and genuine independence means accessible transport; the ability to get into shops so we spend money and play our part in Britain's economic recovery; access to education; take up of employment and the ability to go to the pub with colleagues afterwards and not worry about pleading to get the toilet key from the bartender. We also want to be able to fulfil our civic duty by volunteering and helping to meet the needs of others.

This will all depend on staff in agencies accepting directions from us, the service users and consumers, even though they think they know better. At the same time, wider society must dismantle the barriers to learning, to volunteering, to accessing goods and services. Families, carers, college staff and social workers also have a role to play in recognising that a risk averse approach not only limits our enjoyment of our lives but also our rights. Disabled people need to be realistic about what the state can deliver but we know that what we want often costs less than what we are told we need so this hurdle to progress is less significant than some politicians realise.

There is some urgency about co-production with the beginning of the new financial year and the continuing need for the public sector to deliver its statutory responsibilities. The UK Government's benefit cuts such as the Independent Living Fund, mortgage interest relief and the Disability Living Allowance means that devolved services are going to have to pay for the fallout. As a result politicians in Scotland need to plan accordingly.

GDA believes in the social model of disability and that definition has a particular resonance because the budget cuts impact on disabled people disproportionately. GDA believes that people are disabled by barriers in society which have not planned for their inclusion. This means that disability shifts from being a private

trouble and is as a public, social issue – a problem that has to do with the way society is organised rather than with individual deficit. So the budget cuts are restricting our lives even more and that is why co-production is an empowering method to navigate towards effective and tailored solutions for disabled people that should happen whether the state is poor or rich.

Leaders in the public sector are clear that we spend too much on dealing with the negative and too little on preventing problems arising in the first place. Too much money is spent badly so what money we have, and it is still a huge amount, needs to be shaped to support the life we want.

This is all pie in the sky unless people can engage with the process and that does cost money: people need to be confident, able to speak up and to communicate their choices, to understand what to ask for, and to have an awareness of what works. Public servants need to listen more, respect choices and work with us.

Co-production is politically neutral, is here to stay and ensures the delivery of public services that meet people's needs and their reasonable expectations. There is a great deal of unanimity that reform is needed so let us all ensure we get it right for individual disabled people across Scotland.

Thirdforcenews 1st April 2011



Deaf charities join forces

Two of the oldest organisations working with deaf people in Scotland have merged. Deaf Action and Tayside Deaf Association announced the merger this week. Between them, the two charities have nearly 300 years of experience in working with deaf people and providing services to promote independence. The charities took the decision to merge after funding constraints made it increasingly difficult to compete for funds.



Liz Scott Gibson, director of Deaf Action commented: "We are overwhelmed by the number of people that came out to support our work. We are looking forward to continuing the great work done here and to developing innovative services to meet the needs of deaf people today".

It is estimated that 1 in 5 people in Scotland are affected by some degree of hearing loss.

Ian Johnston, a social worker and chairman of Tayside Deaf Association (TDA), said that as a small, local charity his organisation faced challenges and decided the best way forward was through merger with the bigger charity. TDA provided specialist social work services to deaf people on behalf of the three local authorities in Tayside. The merged organisation will continue to deliver these services and planned to further develop them.



"There is always anxiety around changes but I firmly believe it is a sensible move for the local organisation," said Johnston. "It will make it stronger and better able to develop services in Tayside."

Gillian Smith from Dundee spoke about her experiences as the mother of a deaf child. She said she hoped the larger organisation would help raise awareness of the services available for deaf people. She told how she gained access to services for her daughter Caitlin as a result of a chance meeting. "Caitlin was diagnosed when she was two and a half and I was told she would have to wear hearing aids," said Smith.

"We were then left to get on with it. When she was four I came across a stall promoting National Deaf Awareness Week. "I didn't know I was entitled to any help but the girl there took my details and said someone from Tayside Deaf Association would help. "But for that chance encounter, I don't know what position we would be in now."

Third Force News 5th april 2011