

# Open Door

Issue 23  
Spring 2007



## Interim funding for wheelchairs inadequate

On March 16 a £1 million funding package to help address waiting times for NHS wheelchair and seating services was announced by Deputy Health Minister Lewis Macdonald, who said:

“I understand how important it is for people to get access to NHS wheelchair and seating services, and I have listened to the views of users as to the benefits targeted funding can bring. Today’s announcement is another clear case of our investment to make a real difference for patients and their families. The money will enable the NHS to take steps such as buying in more modern new wheelchairs and the recruitment of extra staff to make assessments and provide support to patients.

“The next step is for Scotland’s five regional wheelchair centres, based in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Inverness, to prepare business cases as to how they will make best use of their share of the funding.”

However, following the announcement managers of the wheelchair services threatened to withdraw from talks on the future of the wheelchair service unless funding was increased.

Andy Menzies, the manager of wheelchair services in the Highlands and Western Isles, said although the extra money was welcomed, it would only help their needs in the short term.

“It is only a small amount and we need an awful lot more to do the service justice. This money does not allow us to plan in the long term,” he commented.

Ron Skinner, former Convenor of SDEF and a member of the NHS Wheelchair Steering Group that reported on the review of the wheelchair service said: "As an NHS Wheelchair user of over 50 years and as a representative of wheelchairs users on the NHS Wheelchair Steering Group which made 40 recommendations to the Deputy Health and Community Care Minister Lewis Macdonald on March 31 2006, this funding may make a difference to some patients and some families but not to all patients and all families. This applies a small sticking plaster to a long running sore which is in need of more adequate care to avoid recurring problems."

"The Independent Report, which the Minister spent £100,000 on, identified a shortfall in current funding to 2004/5 of £2.4M. With Health Boards receiving uplifts of at least 7% in the current year 2006/7 the shortfall may be in the region of over £30m.

"I ask you on behalf of users and carers to press the Deputy Minister for a firm commitment on funding before the end of the month as we are fearful that this may be put on the backburner following the Elections in May. We are not satisfied that our recommendations should be the subject of the Spending Review as we have had Report after Report drawing attention to the issues as far back as 1982".

Speaking in a recent debate on Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, Mrs Nanette Milne MSP asked that the wheelchair service be considered in the forthcoming spending review and should be properly funded thereafter.

SDEF recently wrote to the Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee to encourage the Committee to keep the original petition by Margaret Scott, that prompted the wheelchair review, live until the recommendations of the wheelchair review are implemented.

## Contents

Convenor's Report	4
Government announces public consultation on measuring progress towards equality	5
Fieldfare Trust – Scottish Outdoor Access for All	6
New Fundraising Handbook	7
News from Abroad	8
Election 2007	8
Equal Opportunities Committee	8
Volunteering and Younger Disabled People	9
New help for Schools	10
Bionic Eye	10
Video Relay Service Closes	10
Government could do more to help disabled people retain jobs	11
New pilot to help speed up the benefits process across Scotland	11
The Scottish Artist's Network	12
Free Personal Care continues to be a success	12
Three months and counting	13
Big Lottery to hand out £200K at the Gathering	13
Morag Alexander appointed as CEHR Commissioner for Scotland	14
Deaf Awareness Week	14
Get on your Bike!	15
Nationwide Awards	15
Access Panel Conference 2007	16
Learning Needs Analysis	17
Inspiration?	18
New Access Panel Directors	19
Public bodies could face legal action for failing disabled people	19
Blind Microlight Pilot	20
Matildah	20
DRC – Disabled People Wanted	21
NHS – Signage and Wayfinding	23
Disability Agenda – Creating an Alternative Future	23
Planning Advice Note 81	24
Flexible Working for Carers Extended	25
Equality Web Resource	25
Fair for All launches tip cards to improve access to GP services	26

## Convenor's Report

The undoubted success of the Access Panel Conference at Beancross in February with over 90 people attending was due to the substantial effort made by all our staff, our access team of Elaine Wilson and Keith Robertson, assisted by Liz Rowlett, our very able Parliamentary Officer. A big thank you to all the members, carers and invited guests who attended, some of whom travelled substantial distances to be with us.

During lunch I visited as many tables as possible to seek views and opinions on our work and progress to date. I once had a business colleague who weighed in at over 20 stone and commented to me that you could always "eat a little more". I told him you can always work a little harder and that is what we must all do if we want our ambitions to be realised.

Your new Board has spent the first few meetings re-arranging the furniture, more to accommodate our business plan. We need to put flesh on the bones of several ideas prompted by members and directors. Staff time is finite and we must plan what we aim to achieve in an efficient and effective manner.

Once our financial situation regarding grant income is known we will finalise our plans and seek your views.

There are numerous matters currently being discussed relating to disability from Blue Badge abuse to improved toileting and changing facilities. Much time and thought needs to be devoted to these matters and to the consultation documents which thud through the letterbox on a daily basis.

In respect of the Inclusive Environmental Access and Design course at Heriot-Watt, supported by SDEF, we have the fifth and final course commencing in March. I say final in the sense that it will exhaust the funds generously provided by the Scottish Executive. If there is further demand for courses in the future, it may be possible to attract a sponsor for another series. In the meantime work continues in conjunction with Edinburgh University to finalise a Masters Degree in Access which those who passed the present course should be able to apply for.

**Best regards**  
**Peter Ingram-Monk,**  
**Convenor**

## Government announces public consultation on measuring progress towards equality for disabled people

On 14<sup>th</sup> February, The UK Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire, announced the launch of a public consultation to ask disabled people what equality means to them, and to gain their views on how Government can best monitor progress towards equality for disabled people.

The consultation is being led by the Office for Disability Issues (ODI), which was set up to help Government departments work together to deliver equality for disabled people by 2025.

The consultation launch coincides with the publication by the Disability Rights Commission of their “Disability Agenda”, which sets out the core themes on which the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights should focus.

Speaking today at an event organised by the Disability Rights Commission, Ms McGuire said:

“Disabled people are the experts about their priorities. That's why I'm launching a consultation today, which will help to find out what disabled people and those whose lives are affected by disability think. We also want to know how we should measure progress in achieving equality for disabled

people by 2025. I look forward to seeing the outcomes of the consultation over the next few months, and the continuing involvement of disabled people in this work.”

The ODI held a number of events in the UK during March. The Edinburgh meeting at Heriot-Watt on March 27 was well attended, with discussions around what we mean by equality, independent living, transition to adulthood and employment.

SDEF is keen to seek the views of its members on the consultation document which is on the ODI website

[www.officefordisability.gov.uk](http://www.officefordisability.gov.uk).

Those wishing to comment should contact [liz.rowlett@sdef.org.uk](mailto:liz.rowlett@sdef.org.uk)

The Office for Disability Issues has also published ‘Improving Information for Disabled People’ and ‘Five principles for producing better information for disabled people’

The Disability Rights Commission has published a “Disability Agenda”, setting out the core themes on which it believes the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights should focus:

<http://www.disabilityagenda.org/>



# Fieldfare Trust

## Scottish Outdoor Access For All

### Progress Report

#### Background

This report outlines progress made to date on the Scottish Outdoor Access For All project managed by Fieldfare Trust. It is supported in this work by the Scottish Disability Equality Forum (SDEF). The project aims to:

- involve disabled people in the consultation for the Core Path Network (CPN) in Fife
- enable and develop a team of disabled people in countryside accessibility techniques
- identify a network of accessible paths to be included in the Fife CPN
- disseminate the project methodology and outcomes to other areas in Scotland

#### Timetable

The project started in September with the recruitment of a part-time project officer, a delay of approximately 6 months in the original programme. The project is scheduled to last 21 months, finishing in May 2008. If possible

the programme will be accelerated to meet funders' timetables.

#### Project Area

The project covers all of North East Fife, with the exception of St Andrews, which is ineligible for Leader+ funding. Initially the project will focus on Cupar and Ceres area, following which it will move to other parts of NEF, provisionally in the order of: Tayport, Newport; East Neuk; and then Howe of Fife.

#### Staffing

The project staff consists of a part time CEO of Fieldfare Trust who also manages the project, and a part time Project Officer (12 hours per week) who carries out the survey work, recruitment of volunteers, and organising walks. The initial few weeks were spent on staff development in the countryside accessibility standards, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and survey techniques.

## **Project Methodology**

The draft proposals for the Core Path Network in Fife has been provided by Fife Council and a desk-top analysis has been carried out, using GIS, to identify potential accessible paths. This has been followed up by an initial survey to check out barriers etc and to collect photographs of the routes. A more detailed survey of the paths to be tested by volunteers is then carried out and walks organised to obtain detailed comments and suggestions to feed back to the Council. Informal training of the volunteers is carried out during the walks and the photos used to provide information to the volunteers so they can decide on further paths to survey.

## **Consultation**

Initially, over 30 letters have been sent out to all appropriate organisations in the area, providing information on the project, offering a meeting or presentation and seeking volunteers to take part. In addition, meetings have also been held with the Access Officer for Fife and the local councillors for the area.

## **Volunteer Recruitment**

Recruitment of volunteers has been slow to pick up, probably reflecting the existing commitments of people and the season of the year, but five people have now been recruited with more expected following a presentation to St Andrews Stroke

Club last week. It is anticipated that more will come forward as the project develops and word gets round.

## **Survey Work**

To date, an initial survey has been carried out on sixteen paths and more detailed surveys started on 4 which have been identified as the most suitable.

Detailed information from the surveys is recorded on a programme; "Path Surveyor".

## **Funding**

Funding for the project has been committed from SDEF, Scottish Natural Heritage and Leader+, an EC programme for rural areas. The total project cost is estimated at £48,000 and there are no budget variations at the present time.

## **New Fundraising Handbook**



The Directory of Social Change has just announced the publication of their latest edition of The Complete Fundraising Handbook. It has been completely updated with new material on income generation and contracts, the National Lottery, government funding, company giving and the European Union.

For further information visit:

<http://www.dsc.org.uk>

## A word of thanks.....

SDEF would like to thank Standard Life for printing Issues 22, 23, 24 and 25 of Open Door free of charge. This has means that is has a more “magazine” look and we are able to distribute more copies. We are actively looking for additional sponsorship to expand our readership further.

## News from Abroad

### Reported in the Times recently:

#### Madrid

A driver caught speeding has been cleared of defrauding an insurance company that paid him £360,000 in 1998 after he was blinded in an accident. A judge accepted that he had taken the wheel but could not see the road.

### Another great one, this time from the Metro:

A blind man who drove while his wife gave steering tips was caught doing 100mph. Domingo Merino is to keep his disability pension after proving to a court in Barcelona he couldn't see!

## Election 2007

The RNID is preparing for the forthcoming elections in Scotland and Wales.

RNID Scotland wants to see:

- Audiology waiting times published and reduced to 18 weeks
- A centre of excellence for people with a hearing loss and mental health issues
- Increased access to health and public services, the workplace and arts and culture for all deaf and hard of hearing people

They cannot do this alone. They need members and their friends to challenge MSPs right up to the election.

## Equal Opportunities Committee

The Scottish Parliament Equal Opportunities Committee hosted an event at the Scottish Parliament in February to review progress and look at the way forward.

The event was addressed by Trevor Philips, Chair of the Commission of Equalities and Human Rights.

Delegates from the voluntary sector, including SDEF, spoke in the Chamber on issues over which they were concerned and debated a Vision for Equalities in Scotland. The report is available on the Scottish Parliament website.

## Volunteering and Younger Disabled People

SDEF will be publishing a report on Volunteering and Younger Disabled People on the SDEF website during April 2007. The work was commissioned by SDEF and carried out by Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS) during 2006.

SDEF commissioned an earlier piece of work in 2005 looking at the composition of Access Panels and perceived that younger people with disabilities were relatively under-represented. We were intrigued to learn more about the possible reasons for this and to see if there was any way in which younger people could be encouraged to participate more fully.

The fieldwork largely took place during the summer and autumn of 2006 and involved two structured questionnaires, distributed respectively to organisations which engage volunteers and to volunteers themselves. The research also involved interviews and focus group sessions to tease out further evidence and views. In all 38 organisations participated, of which 18 were Access Panels and more than 60 individual volunteers also took part.

The research looked at patterns of volunteering and noted the numbers coming forward by age bands. The research also looked at the numbers who considered themselves to be disabled and

further stratified the results by age groups.

The work examined how groups recruit, what support and guidance they offer, the types of task which are performed and the length of time people tend to stay. Attitudes towards recruiting younger people and the attitudes of young volunteers were also scrutinised. Motivation was a key area for research, as were the obstacles which might put off potential recruits. These included both physical and psychological barriers.

Finally, people were asked to identify the benefits of volunteering, both from the point of view of the recruit and the organisations gaining their services. Although people could also point to negatives, the benefits were very clear.

The report was originally due to conclude with recommendations on how best to recruit, motivate, deploy, progress and retain younger volunteers. However, as the author was due to address our Access Conference in February 2007, it was decided that the event should be used to gather further advice to be recorded as 'top tips' within the final document.

We hope that the report will be helpful to all. It may be viewed at [www.sdef.org.uk](http://www.sdef.org.uk) Printed copies or other formats can be requested from SDEF.

## New help for Schools

Clackmannanshire Council has pledged to install Soundfield Systems in their local classrooms. These systems, which will raise the level of the teacher's voice have been piloted in ten classrooms and proved such a success they will be rolled out across the county. The move follows RNID research, which reveals that one in five children could be missing out in the classroom because they struggle to hear their teachers.

The systems have also been installed in several schools in Falkirk.

Open Door would like to know how many schools in your area have hearing assistive systems. Send the details to [elaine.wilson@sdef.org.uk](mailto:elaine.wilson@sdef.org.uk) or post them to Elaine at the address at the end of this publication.

**Congratulations to our Company Secretary, Agnes and her husband, Colin who recently celebrated their Emerald Wedding Anniversary.  
Our best wishes to you both.**

## Bionic Eye

The BBC has reported that US and German Scientists have designed a bionic eye to allow blind people to see again.

It comprises a computer chip that sits at the back of the eye, linked up to a mini video camera built into glasses.

Images captured on the camera are sent to the chip, which converts them to impulses that the brain can interpret.

It is hoped that trials will begin within the year.

Further information can be obtained from the RNIB or the BBC Health Website

[www.news.bbc.co.uk/health](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/health)

## Video Relay Service Closes

RNID has announced the closure of RNID Signtalk, the telecom service for deaf people, due to lack of funds. Dr Mark Downs, RNID's executive director of technology and enterprise said: "Ofcom has confirmed that video relay is essential for users of British Sign Language (BSL) if they are to be fully enabled citizens in the digital world, but did not address the question of funding. This is disappointing. With adequate funding we would be able to develop and grow the service."

## Government could do more to help disabled people retain jobs

A recent report from the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee notes that in recent years the number of people receiving Incapacity Benefit has risen. Only 50% of people with disabilities, of working age, are in work compared with 75% of the working age population in the UK, although over a third would prefer to be in work.

The report asserts that more needs to be done to help people with disabilities stay in work. It calls for more flexible support and advice tailored to meet the varying needs of disabled people and says that the present range of schemes to help people into work is confusing. There is variation in the quality of service delivery and poor monitoring of outcomes. Overall employers' attitudes and misconceptions remain a huge barrier to people with disability gaining and retaining employment.

House of Commons Public Accounts Committee Sixth Report: Gaining and retaining a job: the Department for Work and Pensions' support for disabled people.  
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmpublicacc.htm>

## New pilot to help speed up the benefits process across Scotland

A new scheme that will speed up benefit payments to Scotland's most vulnerable has been launched in Scotland. The pilot, the first agreement of its kind in the UK, will allow GPs to send information relating to Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Attendance Allowance (AA) claims electronically, thereby speeding up the whole process and ensuring that people receive their payment as quickly as possible. If it is successful, Ministers will consider extending the process to other benefits across the whole of Scotland.

Welcoming the new co-operation between the UK benefits system and NHS Scotland, Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire said: "At present there are around 3,000 new claims for Disability Living Allowance made in Scotland every month of which around 1,700 require further information which inevitably delays the time in which people can get their benefit. Strengthening the partnership between the Scottish NHS and the UK benefits system in this way should lead to a reduction in the length of time it takes to process applications and consequently disabled people getting their money quicker." © Department for Work and Pensions (National)

## The Scottish Artists' Network is Live!

The Scottish Artists' Network [www.scottishartistsnetwork.co.uk](http://www.scottishartistsnetwork.co.uk) is a new web based directory that has just been launched. The website showcases Scottish based learning disabled artists and the visual arts organisations that support them.

The Scottish Artists' Network has been set up by the Glasgow based arts organisation Project Ability to encourage interaction, collaboration and support between artists with learning disabilities and inclusive arts organisations in Scotland. It is a one-stop-shop for people who want to find out more about who is currently working and exhibiting, from the Highlands and Islands to the Borders.

The website aims to encourage individuals and groups to promote their work and to share their practice and experience to create a more confident, better connected arts and disability sector.

For further details, or to sign up to the Scottish Artists' Network, log on to:

[www.scottishartistsnetwork.co.uk](http://www.scottishartistsnetwork.co.uk)

Or Contact:

Kirstin Bannerman  
Project Ability, 18 Albion Street,  
Glasgow, G1 1LH  
Tel: 0141 552 2822  
Email: [info@project-ability.co.uk](mailto:info@project-ability.co.uk)  
[www.project-ability.co.uk](http://www.project-ability.co.uk)

## Free Personal Care continues to be a success, says COSLA

Free personal care, the flagship policy of devolution, continues to be a success, according to COSLA President, Pat Watters.

Commenting as an independent evaluation of the policy was published, Councillor Watters said: "This is a defining policy for Scotland and it is a policy that has been a tremendous success for Scotland's elderly.

The report finds that the vast majority of clients received their entitlements under the policy without undue delay or complication. That said, the evaluation published today is not an absolute clean bill of health in that it flags up some implementation issues.

The report will act as a springboard in allowing ourselves and the Executive to address some of the areas where there are difficulties. However these difficulties are small in the overall context of the policy's success and both local and central government politicians are fully committed to seeing free personal care continuing as a success story.

As I say there are a few areas of difficulty flagged up in the report and although they are small in number they still need sorted out.

For each of the individuals affected they are a source of major concern and that is why they are a priority for us. What I would like to see in the post election period is enough space to allow us and the Executive to sit down and resolve these outstanding issues once and for all, our elderly people deserve no less."

## Three Months and Counting

The funds that were issued to Access Panels by The Scottish Executive in 2004 and administered by SDEF are coming to an end on 30<sup>th</sup> June this year. We would like to point out that it is not SDEF which has put this deadline in place but The Scottish Executive and they have determined that this is the final date when we can countersign any cheques for this money.

The Executive has also made it plain that any funds that remain unspent must be paid back to them.

It is, therefore, important that all panels do their utmost to ensure that all their Executive money is spent before 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

## Big Lottery to hand out £200K at the Gathering

The Big Lottery will be testing a new live grant-making scheme at The Gathering this year.

Organisations will have to make a public pitch to attendees at the event, who will decide who gets a grant using an electronic voting device.

The aim of this pilot is to give the public a bigger say in how Lottery funds are spent, and if it is a success, it may be used at other events.

Grants of between £500 and £10,000 will be handed out.

The Gathering is taking place this year at the SECC from 24 to 26 May.

For further information visit their website:

[www.scvo.org.uk/gatherscotland](http://www.scvo.org.uk/gatherscotland)

## Morag Alexander appointed as CEHR Commissioner for Scotland

Ruth Kelly today announced the appointment of Morag Alexander as the Scotland Commissioner for the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR).



Morag Alexander was appointed the first Convener (Chair) of the Scottish Social Services Council in 2001.

She was also

director of the Equal Opportunities Commission, Scotland from 1992 to 2001, chair of the Early Years Advisory Group of Children in Scotland from 1995 to 2003 and a trustee of Turning Point Scotland from 1998 to 2006. Morag is also a Member of the Court of Scotland's Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh.

Morag is one of eleven Commissioners who will work with Chair, Trevor Phillips and Deputy Chair Margaret Prosser, to steer the CEHR as it begins its journey towards a Britain more at ease with its diversity.

More information available on CEHR website

<http://www.cehr.org.uk/>

**SDEF Open Door**  
**Issue 23 Spring 2007**  
**Page 14 of 28**

## Deaf Awareness Week (7 – 13 May)



RNID will be raising awareness of all aspects of deafness during this year's Deaf Awareness Week.

The week will focus on the many different ways deafness and hearing loss can affect people's lives and includes:

- The first ever Community Awards to acknowledge the efforts of individuals who have made a positive difference to the lives of deaf and hard of hearing people.
- RNID's Big Sound Check – challenging people to call the special telephone hearing check on 0845 600 55 55

For further information or to get a nomination form call 0808 808 123 or 0808 808 900 (textphone).

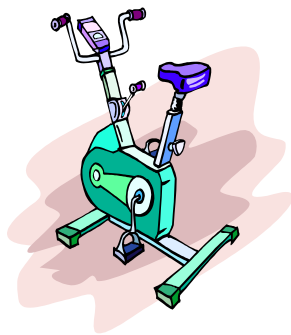
[informationline@rnid.org.uk](mailto:informationline@rnid.org.uk)

## Get on your bike!

In April 2007, the Limbless Organisation of Northeast Scotland – L.O.O.N.S. – will be organising a Charity Cycle from Land's End to John O' Groats..... on Exercise Bikes !! The Challenge will continue till June.

You can take part and help raise Money !

All Individuals, Health Clubs, Leisure Centres, Oil Rigs,



Offices etc, will be able to join in and support this Fund Raising Challenge, raising money to buy specially adapted Bikes for the

Rehabilitation of Local Amputees, along with other appropriate Sports Equipment to allow those with a Disability to enjoy Sport !

The Challenge will be completed at the Aberdeen Highland Games

**If you are interested, and wish an Information Pack,email:**  
[loons126@hotmail.com](mailto:loons126@hotmail.com),

or call 01224 644 749 for details.

If you wish to support the Cycle Challenge, please raise as much as you can.

**Limbless Organisation Of  
Northeast Scotland**

**Scottish Charity Number  
SCO35939**

**Your support will be gratefully  
received !!**

**Supported by Halfords**

## The Nationwide Awards for Voluntary Endeavour

Throughout the UK, there are thousands of people who happily give up their time to help our local communities. They often work long hours under difficult conditions to support their chosen cause.

The National Awards for Voluntary Endeavour are designed to recognise those who have made an outstanding contribution to their local community.

If you wish to nominate someone, further information is available at [www.nationwide.co.uk](http://www.nationwide.co.uk), we also have a small supply of nomination forms in the office.

Closing date for nominations is 30<sup>th</sup> April 2007.

## **Access Panel Conference 2007**

In February 2007, SDEF held an Access Panel Conference at Beancross Farm, near Falkirk. The event attracted more than 90 participants including delegates, carers, speakers and exhibitors.

The theme of the day was 'enhancing effectiveness' and involved a number of presentations and workshops. The first was 'Engaging with the Political Processes in Scotland' and the speaker was Jillian Flye of the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO). Jillian went through a number of approaches for exercising influence with decision makers at a local, Scottish, UK and European level. Participants were then asked to work in groups to address some questions on how lives had been changed by political decisions at each level.

The second session involved a training professional, David Wills, who spoke about recent research on the effectiveness of Panels and how current skills and knowledge could be augmented. He also looked at the support structures presently in place and how these too could be improved.

After lunch, three members of staff from SDEF gave a presentation on their respective roles and how

these remits come together as part of SDEF's overall strategy and Business Plan. The Manager described the development of the organisation, how it strives to advance the concerns of people with disabilities in Scotland and the support it makes available to members. The Policy, Information and Parliamentary Officer spoke about the various structures, of which SDEF is a part, which bring influence to bear on decision-takers and the matters on which we have had an input recently. The Access Development Officer described his role in providing immediate support to Panels across Scotland. A number of questions were taken from the floor.

The final session addressed the subject of how Panels could remain vital through the recruitment of fresh volunteers, particularly younger volunteers. The first speaker was Christine Reilly of Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS), who had recently conducted a study, commissioned by SDEF, examining why younger disabled people volunteer and what are the difficulties which might deflect them. The session also involved young people from Cowal Access Panel who told delegates of their own motivation, approaches, difficulties and successes. Delegates were then asked to address a number of questions in groups. These examined recruitment and support issues and led to the collection of a number of 'top tips' from the various tables.

Christine Reilly indicated that these would be collated and included in her final report.

This year a number of exhibitors took part and delegates were able to examine a range of devices and handouts of interest. Time was also allowed for mingling with one another and picking up information on the activities of other Panels.

The day was chaired by Peter Ingram-Monk, Convenor of SDEF and the afternoon session was co-ordinated by Linda Miller, Access Director. We are indebted to the volunteer facilitators who kindly assisted the workshop sessions and reported back, and to the Palantypist Lynn Allen whose work greatly assisted the event. We hope everybody had a good day and were encouraged by the early feedback from participants.



Thanks to the management and staff at Beancross, especially Colin, Graham, Gary and Laura; Douglas Telford of Access Audio who supplied the hearing assistive system; Charlie Murphy and Andrew Baird, who assisted the SDEF staff and kept Elaine calm; Disability Now, Mobilise and Access Journal for supplying free magazines and finally to all the delegates for making the effort to attend and participate.

## Learning Needs Analysis

At the time of writing (March 2007), SDEF was about to publish a Learning Needs Analysis on its web site. The work was commissioned by SDEF from Nick McBain Training Associates, to try to establish areas in which the Access Panel Network and others could hone their skills and knowledge base to work effectively on behalf of disabled people in Scotland.

The work was largely conducted from around May 2006 and proceeded on the basis of personal interviews, telephone enquiries, an e-survey and follow-up meetings with groups. The research aspect was completed by December 2006.

Participants were invited to comment on a wide range of areas in which they felt existing skills and knowledge were good, in need of refinement, or possibly absent. The research examined these in terms of the network, specific groups and the individuals who comprise them. People were also asked to examine the support they receive from a number of sources, including the Umbrella Body and statutory and other agencies.

The study looked at how participants assessed the current effectiveness of their work, present shortcomings, impediments to progress and possible solutions. As might be expected the results showed an interesting mix of good

practice and scope for improvements. The work can be examined in detail on [www.sdef.org.uk](http://www.sdef.org.uk) Printed copies or other formats may be requested from SDEF.

As is known, the Support Funding for Local Access Panels, made available by the Scottish Executive, is due to terminate in the summer of 2007. SDEF has worked with a training professional to compile a directory of useful training subjects, for circulation to Panels. The compiler of the work was also involved in the Learning Needs Analysis and addressed the problems highlighted, and possible solutions, at our recent Access Conference at Beancross Farm.

SDEF, as Umbrella Body, is anxious to act upon the needs highlighted by the research and to provide the support identified by participants. Where the work has indicated areas in which our own input could be improved, we will make adjustments to ensure Panels receive the best possible support. We hope that the study and its findings will be helpful to all and thank everyone who took part.

## **Inspiration ? by your Access Development Officer Keith Robertson**

Hello my friends and colleagues, I believe that in life we must all have inspiration and in the people who inspire us to go on from day to day, especially for us who are disabled and find life anything but easy and are constantly faced with discrimination of one sort or another.

When every day we suffer discrimination, pain, frustration, fatigue, anger, poverty, and a general struggle to live the life we would want for ourselves and our families, many of us think about people who inspire us to help us keep going.

You all know me as the ADO from SDEF but I thought that perhaps I should bare my soul a wee bit and tell you who inspires me. There are three people who have had a significant inspirational effect on my life; my darling wife JJ, my Grandpa and Dr Martin Luther King Jnr.

What many of you also don't know is that at times I write poetry so I thought I would share some of it with you via the issues of 'Open Door'. Some may be about disability some about life but all with meaning and passion. Some of my poetry has been published by 'The

International Poets Society' and  
'Noble House'.

It is my intention to put one into  
each of the next few issues of  
'Open Door'. This first one I wrote  
some time ago and is a tribute to a  
person who I believe to be one of  
the greatest men who as ever lived,  
I hope you enjoy.

### **Dr King**

In the city of Atlanta in the US of A,  
There grew up a man still  
remembered today,  
A man with such courage that can't  
be repeated,  
Within him much honour and faith  
was deep-seated,  
This humble, kind black man stood  
tall amongst others,  
He believed that all men would  
someday be brothers,  
With unshakable loyalty a cause he  
did lead,  
The civil-rights movement without  
colour or creed,  
Never with anger a hand did he  
raise,  
Violence for him in this world had  
no place,  
Thousands of people marched  
through state after state,  
To follow this man who knew love  
without hate,  
For all men to be equal was what  
he did strive,  
And was honoured quite justly the  
Nobel Peace Prize,  
This wonderful orator many times  
did he speak,  
To gather the strong and rally the  
weak,

And the words that he spoke could  
hit like a sting,  
So righteous and true was Martin  
Luther King,  
But while on a visit to the state  
Tennessee,  
He was shot in cold blood by  
James Earl Ray,  
But Dr King's words can be heard  
from the past,  
I can hear him cry out: Free at last,  
Free at last.

Keith Robertson © 2007

## **New Access Panel Directors**

SDEF welcomes Maurin  
MacDonald onto the Board as an  
Access Panel Director. She is  
joined by Gordon Mungall who has  
taken on the role of Access Panel  
Director. The Access Team is  
looking forward to working with  
them.

## **Public bodies could face legal action for failing disabled people**

One in six public sector organisations  
in Scotland could be facing legal  
action after they failed to meet a new  
duty which came into force last year.

A survey by the Disability Rights  
Commission (DRC) found that one  
local authority, three Scottish colleges,  
three national arts and cultural  
organisations and a further 38 public  
bodies have still failed to produce a  
Disability Equality Scheme, almost  
three months after the 4 December.

2006 deadline.

## **Blind Pilot flying micro light half way across the world**

Miles Hilton-Barber, a 58 year old from Derbyshire is hoping to become the first blind pilot to fly from the UK to Sydney, Australia.



He is currently undertaking the 35 day flight with his co-pilot, Storm Smith relying on speech output on his instruments to raise money for the charity "Seeing is Believing", which is supported by the World Health Association which attempts to wipe out preventable blindness in developing countries.

Miles has had some remarkable adventures over the past 25 years, including;

- Climbing Mt Kilimanjaro and Mt Blanc
- Setting Malaysian Grand Prix lap record for a blind driver in a 200kph Lotus
- Completed more than 40 skydiving jumps

For further information and to view Miles' Blog visit

[www.mileshilton-barber.com](http://www.mileshilton-barber.com)

**SDEF Open Door  
Issue 23 Spring 2007  
Page 20 of 28**

## **Matildah**

Matildah stands for: Making Advanced Technology Useful for Independent Living for Disabled People at Home.

The team at the University of Dundee are interested in learning from disabled adults (18-65 yrs) about the technologies they use in their homes.

They would like to hear your views on issues such as:

- What technology do you use in your home?
- Have you ever used technology in your home and stopped using it? Why?
- What technology would you like to have in your home? What would it look like?

There are three ways to get involved in the research:

- User club
- On-line discussion forum
- One to one interviews

If you would like to know more about the project please contact:

Dr Fiona M Bolik  
SESWCE (Social Work)  
University of Dundee  
Gardyne Road Campus  
Dundee DD5 1NY

Tel: 01382 464378

Fax: 01382 464296

Email: [info@matildah.org.uk](mailto:info@matildah.org.uk)

## **Disability Rights Commission**

### **Disabled People Wanted**

#### **Are your local public services failing to take disability equality seriously?**

The new Disability Equality Duty means that public authorities like hospitals, colleges, the police, schools and councils must take a positive and practical approach to promote equality and end discrimination. Disabled people have an important role to play in making this happen.

The Disability Rights Commission is running a series of information sessions around Scotland for disabled people and their organisations. Find out about the new duty and the role you play at one of our events:

**Dundee on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May**

**Edinburgh on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> May**

**Oban on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> June**

**Newton Stewart on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> June**

**Stornoway on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July**

For more information or to book a place

Visit [www.dotheduty.org](http://www.dotheduty.org)

Email: [dedscotland@drc-gb.org](mailto:dedscotland@drc-gb.org)

Telephone: 0131 527 4000

**Please note that all places must be booked.**

## Disability Rights Commission

### Guidance for Scotland: Disability Equality Duty

The Disability Rights Commission has produced a wide range of information and guidance on the Disability Equality Duty (DED). Below is a list of the guidance that is available and details of how to get copies.

#### How to do the duty:

Code of Practice for Scotland: the duty to promote disability equality  
Authorities covered by the Disability Equality Duty in Scotland (a list)  
Doing the Duty – an overview of the Disability Equality Duty  
Impact Assessment  
Gathering Evidence  
Involving Disabled People

#### Guidance and information for disabled people:

Making the duty work – A guide for disabled people and their organisations  
An enforcement toolkit for disabled people

#### Sectoral Guidance:

Employment	Local government
Schools education	Scottish Executive
Further and higher education	Procurement
Health	Planning, buildings and streets
Housing	Community Planning Partnerships

#### Other information:

DRC paper on single equality schemes  
DRC paper of Scottish Education Authority DED Schemes  
Bring Equality to Scotland: The Three Public Sector Duties  
DRC assessment template to assess public authorities' Disability Equality Schemes.

#### How to get copies of guidance:

All guidance is available to download from [www.dotheduty.org](http://www.dotheduty.org) and alternative formats are available on request from the DRC Helpline. Printed copies of the Code of Practice are also available from The Stationery Office [www.tso.co.uk](http://www.tso.co.uk)

You can contact the DRC Helpline by voice, text, fax, post or by email via the website. The Helpline is open from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday.

Tel: 08457 622633  
Textphone: 08457 622644  
Fax: 08457 778878  
Website: [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org)

Post: DRC Helpline  
FREEPOST  
MID 02164  
Stratford upon Avon  
CV37 9BR

## NHS – Signage and Wayfinding

Health Facilities Scotland and Fair for All – Disability recently held an event for collecting people with disabilities' experiences on “wayfinding” - finding your way around NHS buildings.



Participants talked about how easy it is to use signage and considered what could be done better. Features of buildings, such as flooring, wall colours, symbols and signage was discussed as well as the benefits of pre-visit information.

The Fair for All team will collate information gathered during the day and it will inform guidance provided to NHS Boards. People wishing to take this up locally should contact their local health board and ask how signage and wayfinding has been addressed in the Disability Equality Scheme.



## Creating an Alternative Future

**The DRC launched their Disability Agenda on 14 February 2007.** Over the coming year the DRC will be seeking to build widespread support and ownership of the Agenda. In particular they hope to ensure strong support for the proposals from their successor body the Commission for Equality and Human Rights.

- Promoting a culture of equality and human rights
- Bringing an end to child poverty
- Increasing life chances through learning and skills
- Ending poverty and widening employment opportunity
- Increasing participation in public, civic and community life
- Developing a social care system fit for the future
- Tackling health inequalities
- Meeting the future housing challenge
- Building stronger, safer communities

More information can be found on their website:

[www.disabilityagenda.org](http://www.disabilityagenda.org)

## **- Planning Advice Note 81. Community Engagement. Planning with People**

The Scottish Executive has recently published PAN 81 on Community Engagement. The planning system in Scotland is currently undergoing an overhaul with Scottish Ministers aiming to make the planning system more inclusive. The PAN reflects the changes of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2006 and outlines good practice that those involved in the planning process should observe. It suggests ways to achieve better community involvement and sets out advice as to how people can participate in planning decisions. Under Standard 1 the PAN stipulates that: “planning authorities should seek to strengthen their links with the Community Planning process and utilise community planning partnerships and their networks as far as possible. It is useful to develop opportunities for engagement through regular contact with existing, wider local authority networks including, for example, customer focus groups, community councils and Access Panels.”

Standard 2 relating to overcoming barriers advises that: “An understanding is needed of the support that particular individuals or groups require to help them engage. There may be a need for practical support such as the provision of suitable transport, crèche facilities, payment of out of pocket expenses, access to premises and communication aids. Participants and consultees may need access to equipment, for example, computers, telephones and photocopying. The needs of minority groups and people with disabilities should be accommodated where possible, including the opportunity to access information in alternative formats such as Braille, large text and audio and the provision of information in alternative languages.”

PAN 81 is available on the Scottish Executive website  
[www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications)

## Flexible Working for Carers Extended

Under the Work and Families Act 2006 the rights of workers to request flexible working have been extended to include employees who care for, or expect to care for adults. This change takes place on April 6, 2007. Although the employer is not bound to grant such a request it now has to be taken seriously. Employees wishing to investigate this should take it up formally with their employer.

Further information, including example letters can be found on the following websites: Information for employees:

[www.direct.gov.uk/Employment/Employees/fs/en](http://www.direct.gov.uk/Employment/Employees/fs/en).

Information for employers:

[www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?r.s=tl&topicId=1073858787](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?r.s=tl&topicId=1073858787)

Additionally ACAS runs a confidential helpline on employment law 08457 474747.

Carers UK has also produced some booklets which are available on the [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org) website and should be available from carers centres.

## Equality Web Resource

The Equality Web Resource was launched in February. This searchable database of statistics, economics and research was developed by Health Department Analytical Services Division in partnership with a range of other organisations across Scotland. It aims to support work on equalities from equality impact assessment to the new duties on public bodies. It provides a breakdown of what information is available on age, gender, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, transgender, and religion/ belief from a range of organisations across Scotland, including the Scottish Executive, Information Services Division (ISD), Health Protection Scotland and Health Boards

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/equality>

## Many thanks!

SDEF worked with the Fair for All team to collate the experiences of disabled people receiving healthcare. The case studies will be used in training material and will help inform NHS personnel. I would like to thank members who sent in their personal stories and hope that they will make a positive difference in the way that people with disabilities are perceived, access health services and are treated.

**Liz Rowlett**

## Fair for All launches tip cards to improve access to GP services



**fair for all – disability**

Positive Action – Real Change

Fair for All – Disability and the Royal College of General Practitioners (Scotland) have been working in partnership for some time to support GP practices improve access for disabled people and have launched some tip cards. The information in the tip cards have been adapted from the Fair for All – Disability guidance ‘Achieving Fair Access’ to assist all staff within NHSScotland improve access to NHS services for disabled people.

The tip cards are not meant to be a comprehensive resource on all disabilities but they will help staff with some quick pointers to meeting the individual needs of people with specific impairments.

The concept of the cards was developed by Lynn Waddell, Senior Practice Development Officer, on behalf of the Fair for All – Disability team, following her visit to North Carolina University – a study visit awarded to her by Forth Valley Health Board.

So far NHS staff have responded to the cards which comprise seven sections. Six of these are dedicated to access needs of specific

disabilities and one for local information. Each card contains some key pointers about communicating with the service user. The cards are laminated and held together by a ring holder to allow cards to be flipped over easily and quickly.

Lynn Waddell said: “We believe that if GPs and their practice staff use the tip cards the experiences of disabled people using NHS services will improve.... We hope that GPs will consider adding new cards on other disabilities or even expand the information into an equality and diversity resource.”

The tip cards were launched at the Fair for All – Disability “thank you” event at the Radisson SAS Hotel in Glasgow.

For further information contact:  
Angela Macleod,  
Fair For All – Disability  
Tel: 0131 527 4041  
Email: [Angela.Macleod@drc-gb.org](mailto:Angela.Macleod@drc-gb.org)

Or,

Mark Farnan, RCGP Scotland  
Tel : 0131 260 6800  
Email:  
[mfarnan@rcgp-scotland.org.uk](mailto:mfarnan@rcgp-scotland.org.uk)

**Become a member and receive a free copy of Open Door (4 per year), please contact the office for an application form:**

**Scottish Disability Equality Forum  
12 Enterprise House  
Springkerse Business Park  
Stirling  
FK7 7UF**

**Tel: 01786 446456  
Fax: 01786 450902  
Email: [maeve.bain@sdef.org.uk](mailto:maeve.bain@sdef.org.uk)**

**Organisations with a majority of people with disabilities on their governing committee are eligible to become Full members. The cost is £5.00 per year.**

**Other organisations are eligible to become Associate Members, also at a cost of £5.00 per year.**

**People can also apply for individual membership at £1 per year.**

**Open Door is available in the following formats:**

**Email      CD ROM      Paper      Large Print      Tape**

**BSL and Braille copies can be provided upon request.**

**Open Door is published by**  
Scottish Disability  
Equality Forum  
12 Enterprise House  
Springkerse Business Park  
Stirling FK7 7UF

Tel: 01786 446456  
Fax: 01786 450902  
Email: [info@sdef.org.uk](mailto:info@sdef.org.uk)  
[www.sdef.org.uk](http://www.sdef.org.uk)

Charity No SC 031893  
Company No SC 243392



Scottish Disability  
Equality Forum

**Open Door is available in  
alternative formats on  
request**

**Any comments made in  
any contributed articles  
do not necessarily reflect  
the policy or the views of  
SDEF.**

**Staff Contact details:**

**Wyn Merrells, Manager**  
[wyn.merrells@sdef.org.uk](mailto:wyn.merrells@sdef.org.uk)

**Liz Rowlett, Policy, Information  
and Parliamentary Officer**  
[liz.rowlett@sdef.org.uk](mailto:liz.rowlett@sdef.org.uk)

**Maeve Bain, Office Administrator**  
[maeve.bain@sdef.org.uk](mailto:maeve.bain@sdef.org.uk)

**Keith Robertson,  
Access Development Officer**  
[keith.robertson@sdef.org.uk](mailto:keith.robertson@sdef.org.uk)

**Elaine Wilson,  
Access Development  
Administrator**  
[elaine.wilson@sdef.org.uk](mailto:elaine.wilson@sdef.org.uk)

**Scottish Disability Equality  
Forum is funded by the  
Scottish Executive**



**Annual Membership of SDEF  
costs just £1 for individuals and  
£5 for organisations.  
If you would like to join, please  
contact [maeve.bain@sdef.org.uk](mailto:maeve.bain@sdef.org.uk)  
telephone 01786 446456  
or complete the form on page**

© Scottish Disability Equality Forum  
December 2007