

May 2009  
Issue 24

*Scotland's Health Magazine that's  
Positive about Disability*

**can**  
**DO**

Cover photo: The Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis) seen from Tromso in Norway.

# CATCH IT

Germs spread easily. Always carry tissues and use them to catch your cough or sneeze.



# BIN IT

Germs can live for several hours on tissues. Dispose of your tissue as soon as possible.



# KILL IT

Hands can transfer germs to every surface you touch. Clean your hands as soon as you can.



## Editor's Note

It was only whilst I was putting the contents for this issue together the realisation struck me that next month's edition will see us halfway through the year already. Again time has flown by.

Next month's issue marks the fifth anniversary of the very first edition of CanDo Magazine. That is a fact I am very proud of, because when 'CanDo' was launched the project received grant funding that was only sufficient to enable production of just one edition.... and here we are 24 issues later!

However, our policy of providing a positive angle on disability matters in Scotland and our bright, colourful, 'in-your-face' appearance proved to be instantly popular with people affected by disability north of the border.

Over the last five years, we've needed to change with the times, but we've featured some great stories and met - either in person, or by phone and email - some fantastic people, all of whom have a common objective: to overcome disability in one form or another. Next month's 'Anniversary' issue will contain a look back at some of the stories and people we've featured since June 2004.

Well, that's next month's edition but for now you will need to make do with this issue and we've a variety of information on the following pages.

We take a look at news items - sometimes in brief and sometimes in a little more detail. Our holiday feature 'The Sunshine Trail' gives some ideas for holidays, days out and short breaks and personally, I am very pleased to see the return of our puzzle page 'Exercise your Grey Matter'.

Remember... CanDo Magazine is your platform and we would be pleased to hear from any individual or group who wish to share their news or experiences with our readers.

Here's hoping you enjoy this month's offering!

Regards

**Nick Smalley FMA**  
Editor



[www.candomagazine.com](http://www.candomagazine.com)

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### CanDo Magazine

a not for profit company limited by guarantee

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## CanDo Magazine... the future is in YOUR hands

CanDo is an independent not-for-profit organisation.  
We do not receive any grants or government funding.

The funds that enable us to bring you not only this publication, but also our other services to charities, come from donations and advertising sales.

If you can help to fund CanDo Magazine, either by placing an advert or making a donation, please contact us at 3 Five Roads, Kilwinning KA13 7JX.



## Voluntary Organisations Reach Crisis Point

The pay and working conditions of staff in Scotland's voluntary organisations have reached 'crisis point' because of public sector funding cuts, a new report warns.

The report is from the trades union Unite, and it says that 'cash-strapped councils and other agencies have become increasingly aggressive in the way they contract services from voluntary organisations', forcing groups to cut costs by reducing salaries and laying off staff, damaging the delivery of key services to the most vulnerable in the process, it said.

Unite is warning that more redundancies will follow unless the Scottish Government introduces a fairer funding system for public sector commissioning of third sector services.

In a survey conducted by Unite, 73% of respondents said their working conditions had worsened or their pay had fallen because of public sector funding cuts.

### ***Don't forget to tell us!***

If you have appropriate news for inclusion in this publication email it to our editor at:

[cando.magazine@btinternet.com](mailto:cando.magazine@btinternet.com)

## Carers' Protest Rally

The rallies in London and Edinburgh organised to protest about the lack of government funding and support Carers receive were well received.

Carers from all over the UK handed in a petition at Downing Street and in Edinburgh where many unfurled banners protesting at the fact that family carers - most of whom receive just a few pence an hour in state allowance - save the government £7.6 billion a year in care costs that it would otherwise need to find.

## Hasselled Into Work Claim

PEOPLE with genuine illnesses are being "hassled" into work or face having their benefits cut, research from Oxfam Scotland has suggested.

Radical reforms, pushed by James Purnell, the Work and Pensions Secretary, are putting stress on ill people to get them off incapacity benefit.

The report, published today, urges government ministers to implement a more "humane" welfare system

It quotes the experience of the Clydebank Independent Resource Centre, which helps people to apply for benefits and jobs and to deal with debt.

Janice Dickson, of the centre, said people now seeking benefits had to wait for six to eight weeks for the new Employment Support Allowance.

She added: "We are getting more people from a wide range of backgrounds who have suddenly been made redundant and need urgent access to funds to pay for their housing and other loans."

Mary Collins, also of the centre, said many people had their benefits reinstated on appeal after it was decided they were too sick to work when medical evidence was examined.

The report also condemns the "continuing privatisation" of employment services and the "punitive" approach to welfare to work schemes.

Jim Boyle, the Programme Co-ordinator for Oxfam Scotland, added: "Once again, it is the most vulnerable people in society who are having to justify the money they receive."

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#### K.C. INFORMATION DAYS MAY 2009

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## Questionnaire Update

Regular readers will recall that we recently reported on a study of MS-associated pain that is being carried out in Ayrshire and Arran by physiotherapist Gayle Connolly.

The survey will be the largest pain survey to be carried out and results will be assessed and used to develop pain management strategies in the future.

Gayle has asked us to remind readers affected by MS in the KA postcode area that they will shortly receive a letter asking if they wish to participate in the survey.

She wants to include as many people as possible with MS, i.e. people with different types of MS, at different stages of the disease, variety of ages etc.

Gayle told CanDo Magazine “The study is a two-tiered system: an initial consent letter has now gone out asking for permission to send the patient out a questionnaire. If people are happy to be included in the study and return the consent slip, then a questionnaire will then be sent out. It is important to stress that people must initially consent to being sent out a questionnaire or they will not be included in the study”.

The MS population of Ayrshire and Arran will receive their consent letter by 8th May. The letter details the study and includes a tear off consent slip, which the patient has to complete along with their name and address - although the results and feedback will be totally confidential.

A freepost envelope is provided for it to be returned to the Douglas Grant Unit in Irvine. Consent letters must be returned no later than Monday 1st June.



## Living Made Easy

Living made easy is an impartial advice and information website about daily living equipment and other aspects of independent living. It has been developed by the Disabled Living Foundation (DLF), a national charity with nearly 40 years experience in providing independent advice about products for disabled adult and children, older people, their carers and families.

Living made easy's core value is impartiality. The website aims to provide comprehensive and independent information about daily living equipment available to the public from national suppliers. This is supported by expert advice created by a team of occupational therapists.

The site provides advice and information that is clear, impartial, independent and trustworthy for disabled and older people, as well as carers and care professionals.

Learn more about Living made easy and daily living equipment at [www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk](http://www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk) or by phoning 0845 130 9177.

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## Project Ability

Project Ability grew out of a year-long project held in Glasgow, in 1981, to mark the International Year of Disabled People, and was registered as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status in 1984.

For twenty years the project has been generating opportunities for people to create art and to exhibit and share their work with the whole community. Each week around 350 people of all ages are involved in the project's programmes.

Project Ability is based at The Centre for Developmental Arts in the Merchant City (Glasgow's main artistic quarter) within the City Centre, a short walk from both St. Enoch and Buchanan Street Underground Stations, and Queen Street and Central Stations.

For over twenty years the team at Project Ability have been supporting individuals to increase their confidence and discover their artistic ability through a long-term developmental workshop programme; to benefit from tuition within a professional working environment and to take part in local, national, and international arts events Project Ability assists those with learning disabilities or mental health problems; children and young people with disabilities and people from minority ethnic communities.

There are currently a series of evening art classes for young people with disabilities in Cranhill running on Thursday's from 23rd April – 28 May 2009, at a cost of £3 per class.

Visual art classes will take place on Thursday evenings at the Cranhill Beacon Centre, for young people aged 8 – 12 with a disability and their siblings.

Booking is essential, please contact:  
Project Ability on 0141 552 2822  
info@project-ability.co.uk  
www.project-ability.co.uk  
18 Albion Street, Glasgow, G1 1LH,

## Making Sense of Inclusion in e-Learning - 27th May 2009

Hosted by the two Scottish Regional Support Centres in collaboration with JISC TechDis, this full day event is for the "movers and groovers" in Scottish tertiary education, supporting accessibility and e-inclusion....probably the best e-Inclusion event in the world.

Be inspired at our workshops and presentations by the leading stars in e-Inclusion! We are absolutely delighted to have attracted the top UK accessibility and inclusion speakers to our Scottish event: JISC TechDis, JISC Legal, BRITE, The University of Southampton, Glasgow Caledonian University, Scotland's Colleges, Glasgow Metropolitan as well as experts with a user's perspective. This dream team of accessibility gurus will share their experiences, inform, challenge your thinking but most of all they will inspire you!

Welcome to The Inclusion Zone! Come and ask the experts! We have designated a large area called The Inclusion Zone, dedicated to 8 of the leading assistive technology and ergonomic resources suppliers in Scotland. Throughout the day there will be opportunities for delegates to have one-on-one sessions and hands on workshops run by the people in the know!

As well as lunch and refreshments throughout the day, each delegate will receive a funky RSC laptop bag full of useful information and goodies including a 2 Gb AccessApps pendrive. There is also a chance to win a valuable prize in our "Ask the Experts" competition.

There are only 70 spaces available for this prestigious event so please book early to avoid disappointment. Call 0141 585 0022 or visit [www.rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk](http://www.rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk)

## Capability's Corseford School gets top marks

Capability Scotland's Corseford School has been praised for providing "a high quality of education and care" in a Government report.

The inspection of the school in Renfrewshire was carried out by the HM Inspectorate of Education and the Care Commission. The school provides day and residential education and respite care for children between 5 and 18 with severe and complex support needs.

James Trott is a pupil at Corseford school. School life has been very positive for the six-year-old, who has complex needs including cerebral palsy and his family are in no doubt that choosing Corseford for James was the right decision.

James's mother Jenny says they were impressed with the Capability Scotland school from the outset. "We decided to request a placement for James at Corseford because we got such positive vibes when we first visited; it felt like a very happy place with a very positive atmosphere. Physically James is coming on well and the one to one support he gets at Corseford makes all the difference to his learning."

Jenny herself is very involved with the school and, as secretary of the Parents Council, knows that other parents have equally positive feelings about the school. "We often get asked at meetings what improvements we would like to see and, to be honest, we struggle to come up with ideas."

Inspectors said pupils are encouraged and empowered, their rights are acknowledged and they are highly motivated and enthusiastic. Pupils have individual curriculums which provide broad, balanced and varied experiences. The high quality of teaching was also highlighted.

Independent living skills are keenly supported within the school's residential accommodation. There is also an after-school club providing activities such as horse-riding, cycling and scouts and cultural awareness is nurtured through visits to art galleries and museums. The development of these skills ensures strong support for pupils' transition to the next stage in their lives.

Head teacher Sue Williams said: "At Corseford we see learning as the key to opening up many opportunities for our pupils. We have high expectations of them, and assist them to develop self-awareness, feel valued and become confident in voicing their ideas and opinions.

"Our staff team also has high expectations of itself. We are committed to providing an integrated approach, which balances education, care and therapy. Highly-qualified, motivated and skilled professionals provide pupils with a stimulating learning experience in an inclusive environment."

Alan Dickson, Chief Executive of Capability Scotland said: "Capability aims to be an ally of disabled people, helping them achieve equality, choice and control through our campaigning and the services we provide. Corseford School truly demonstrates how we can make this vision a reality. I am immensely proud of Sue, the staff and pupils at the school for all that they have achieved."

Local West Renfrewshire MSP Trish Godman said: "I am delighted, but not surprised, that Corseford School has received such a glowing report from the inspectors. Having visited the school on many occasions, I have always been struck by the confidence of the pupils, the positive atmosphere and the wide range of learning experiences and activities that are on offer."

She added "Full credit must go to all the school's staff, pupils and parents for this very positive inspection report."

# Exercise your Grey Matter

ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND AT THE FOOT OF PAGE 20

## Anagramaniacs

Unscramble the countries listed below and then say which is the odd one out and why.

EERGCE  
ORAMNAI  
MULEBIG  
HALLNOD  
ORACEUD  
DENEWS  
YONRAW

## WORD LADDER

Turn **CATS** into **MICE** in 3 moves or less by changing one letter at a time.

cats

mice

## BOOKWORM

Match the book to its author

- A) Carrie  
B) Vanity Fair  
C) Bleak House  
D) The Bourne Supremacy  
E) The Eagle Has Landed  
F) War Of The Worlds  
G) The Moon's A Balloon
- 1) David Niven  
2) Jack Higgins  
3) William Makepeace Thackeray  
4) H G Wells  
5) Stephen King  
6) Charles Dickens  
7) Robert Ludlum

## Spot the Dog



and you could win a prize!

Somewhere on the pages of this magazine is hidden Spot, our cartoon dog (shown above). If you spot him, you could win a Games CD.

All you have to do is tell us the number of the page that Spot is hiding on then send it with your name and contact details to us at:

SPOT THE DOG; CanDo, 3 FIVE ROADS, KILWINNING KA13 7JX

Alternatively you can enter via our website at: [www.candomagazine.com](http://www.candomagazine.com) or by emailing us at [cando.magazine@btinternet.com](mailto:cando.magazine@btinternet.com)

Entries to reach us by 25 May 2009

Normal competition rules apply, for copy of rules send SAE to SPOT, 3 FIVE ROADS, KILWINNING KA13 7JX  
**THIS IS A FREE TO ENTER COMPETITION. POSTAL ENTRIES MUST BEAR THE CORRECT POSTAGE.**

## Nature Quiz

1. Which elephant has larger ears, Indian or African?
2. How many petals does a poppy normally have?
3. Which is the largest of the apes?
4. What word is missing: egg, ....., pupa, adult ?
5. Man, Fly, Spider are all species of which plant?
6. From which tree are cricket bats made?
7. Which country is home to wild koalas?
8. Name two of the three British mammals that hibernate.
9. Which animal lives in a sett?
10. What does a palaeontologist study?



JK steps down  
from MS role

## JK steps down from MS role

JK Rowling has announced why she is standing down as patron of the Multiple Sclerosis Society Scotland, claiming the charity is being split by an internal row. The Harry Potter author, who has been a high-profile supporter of the society for almost a decade, said a "long-standing and escalating" conflict between the Scottish arm of the charity and management in London had damaged morale and caused staff to quit, stating that she could no longer act as the organisation's public face.

Ms Rowling's mother - who had MS - died at the age of 45, and the author has since been an outspoken advocate for more research into the disease and for better standards of care for those affected by it. Scotland has the highest incidence of MS in the world, with in excess of 10,000 people affected... that's one in every 500 of the population.

She said that she had taken the decision to quit "with profound sadness and regret" but would continue to devote her time and money to the cause, and would continue to fund a research project at Edinburgh University.

Ms Rowling's said: "I have now reluctantly decided that I cannot, in good conscience, continue to be the public face of a charity that is changing beyond recognition from the one with which I have been so proud to be associated."

A spokesman for the MS Society said the organisation was in the middle of a governance review, and it regretted Rowling's departure.

The author said that last year she had initiated and attended a mediation session in the hope of resolving differences between the charity's Scottish council and management in London.

"Unfortunately, this achieved very little," said Rowling in her statement. "With mounting frustration and disappointment, I have witnessed resignations of immensely dedicated people within MS Scotland and the increasing demoralisation of staff whom I have come to know and admire over the 10 years of our association. This disease claimed my mother's life at the age of 45, and I hope to continue giving both time and money to a cause which remains so close to my heart."

Ms Rowling has contributed money and support for research and treatment of Multiple Sclerosis, since her mother died in 1990. In 2006, she contributed a substantial sum toward the creation of a new Centre for Regenerative Medicine at Edinburgh University.

A spokesman for the MS Society said: "JK Rowling has been a great patron for the MS Society Scotland for many years. We are sorry she is stepping down and thank her for her good work, and for her continued support for the MS research centre in Edinburgh.

"The Society is in the middle of a governance review to build on the excellent work we already do in Scotland and across the UK. We are a strong, democratic organisation and this review is being done in consultation with all of our 43,000 members. We would have preferred to do this with JK Rowling's involvement, but we appreciate that significant change can be difficult. We would urge supporters of the MS Society to work with us now. The Board is confident that what we are doing is all about delivering the best possible support to over 10,000 people living with MS in Scotland."

In May 2008, bookseller Waterstones asked Rowling and 12 other writers to compose a short piece of their own choosing on an A5 card, which would then be sold at auction in aid of the charities Dyslexia Action and English PEN. Rowling's contribution was an 800-word Harry Potter prequel that concerns Harry's father, James Potter and godfather, Sirius Black, and takes place three years before Harry was born. Rowling claims that she does not intend to return to Harry Potter for at least ten years. The cards were collected together and sold for charity in book form in August 2008.

On 1 August and 2 August 2006 she read alongside Stephen King and John Irving at Radio City Music Hall in New York City. Profits from the event were donated to the Haven Foundation, a charity that aids artists and performers left uninsurable and unable to work, and the medical NGO Médecins Sans Frontières.

In May 2007, Rowling gave \$495,000 to a reward fund of over \$4.5 million for the safe return of a young British girl, Madeleine McCann, who disappeared in Portugal. Rowling, along with Nelson Mandela, Al Gore, and Alan Greenspan, wrote an introduction to a collection of Gordon Brown's speeches, the proceeds of which are donated to the Jennifer Brown Research Laboratory.

# The Sunshine Trail

Our holidays and days out feature

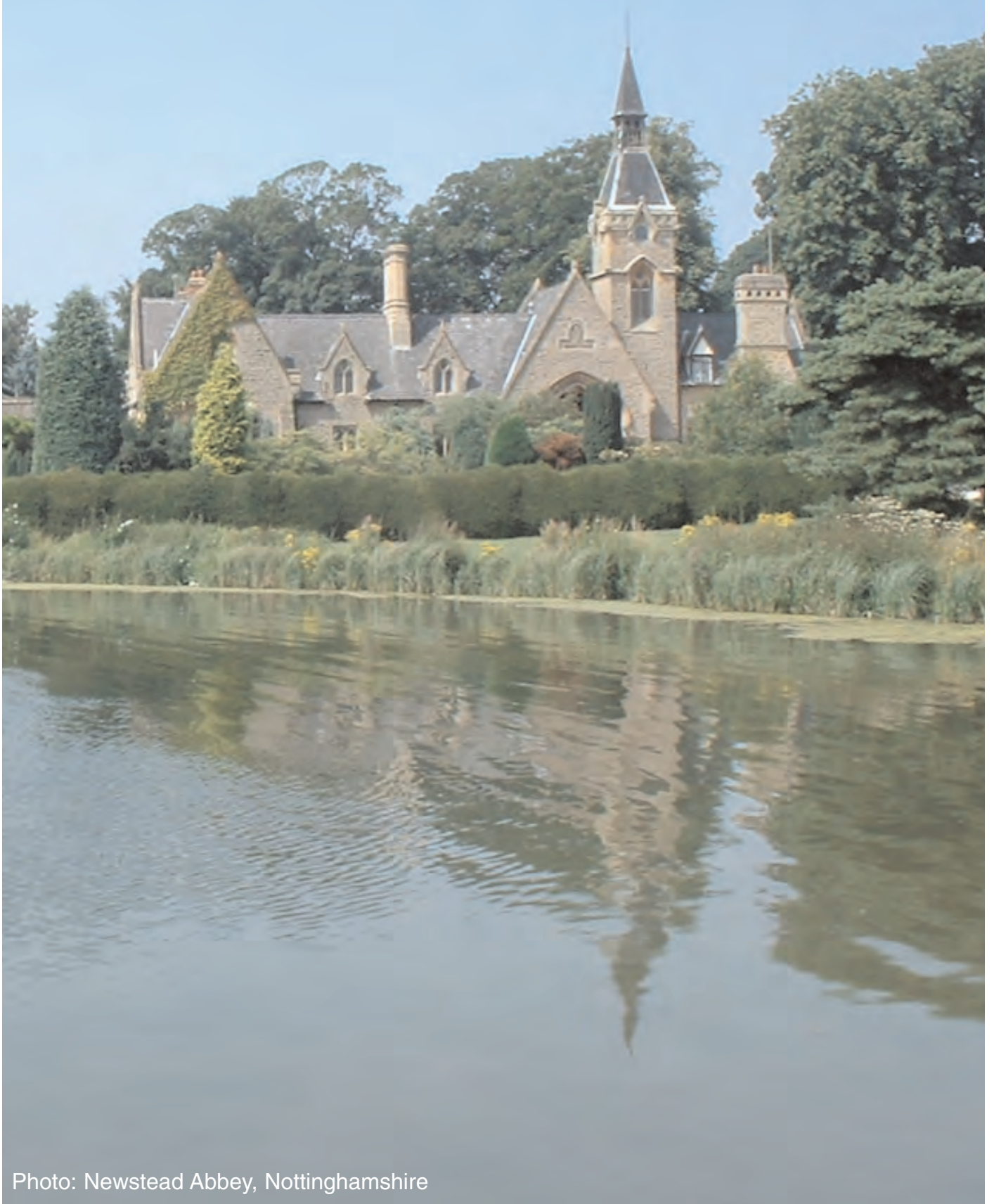


Photo: Newstead Abbey, Nottinghamshire

# Newstead Abbey

Founded as a monastic house in the late twelfth century, Newstead became the Byron family seat in 1540 until most famous owner, the poet Lord Byron, sold the property in 1818.

Newstead Abbey remained a private country house until 1931, when it was presented to the Nottingham Corporation for the public to enjoy.

Why not explore the medieval cloisters, splendid Victorian room settings and the private apartments of the poet Byron?

Browse in the library and marvel at the extensive panelling in the Great Hall, all of which is reputed to have come from a single oak tree!

See the fascinating collection of paintings and furniture throughout the house. A display for families invites you to try on replicas of some of Lord Byron's favourite clothes and be transformed into the romantic hero!

Poet, freedom fighter, lover, athlete, scholar and 'mad, bad and dangerous to know' are all terms which have been used to describe English Romantic poet George Gordon Byron, who lived at Newstead Abbey between 1808 and 1814.



Today visitors can see Byron's private apartments as well as letters, objects and furniture that belonged to the poet, including the table at which he wrote some of his poetry.

Newstead Abbey formal gardens are the perfect place for a stroll along paths that meander past attractive lakes, ponds and waterfalls. The gardens have something to offer in all seasons, with spectacular displays of colour from the rhododendrons in late Spring and the Japanese maples in the Autumn.

Families can explore the maze-like Spanish Garden and spend some time in the children's adventure playground and picnic area. The gardens are set within over 300 acres of historic parkland with a variety of habitats important to nature conservation, including nationally significant heathland and an extensive collection of tree species. Tours of Victorian Kitchen (not on normal visitor route) take place last Sunday of the month from April - September.



You're sure to see peacocks around Newstead

There is a cafe serving coffee, cake and light lunches and a gift shop. The Car park 200 metres from house

Disabled access: Whilst the house is accessible to many, there are a lot of staircases if you wish to view the entire house. By necessity, wheelchairs are restricted to the ground floor.

Much of the gardens and parkland - there's 300 acres of it and you will encounter much wildlife including the peacocks and geese which roam free - is accessible, but be aware that some of the formal gardens are linked in a tiered system by stairways.

There is car and minibus parking near house and disabled toilets are available in grounds

To find out more, please telephone 01623 455900.

# Holiday at Home?

by John Killick, Hon. Secretary of the Disabled Motorists Federation

How often have you asked yourself, why, with the rugged and seldom equalled beauties of Scotland on your doorstep, are you going abroad for your holidays? Perhaps other countries have more sunshine, but all that sun can get very uncomfortable after a while...ask any serviceman returning from Iraq.

No, I think this is just an excuse because of the difficulties of actually booking a holiday in the UK. After all, we have all that beauty without having to worry about unfeeling - and by and large - untrained flight attendants and suchlike, so why not holiday here?

Well, first problem; you get out the pamphlets from the travel agents. You think, "a nice tour of the Highlands by coach... what could be better?" Wrong! No UK coach company, to my knowledge, can take a wheelchair dependent person. So you think, "Oh dear, never mind, I will use my car instead...now let's see what hotels are available?" You look for that little wheelchair symbol. What symbol? None of the brochures show one.

Try the tourist office...perhaps you will have more luck than I did when I wished to take my wheelchair dependent wife home to the Isle of Man. I rang the tourist information centre in Edinburgh...no joy, so I rang the one in Douglas on the Isle of Man! That was a waste of time, they didn't have a list! Fortunately my wife's sister who lives in Ramsey was able to find us a place. I arranged to see a member of the Manx government during our visit to ask why...it was a successful meeting, in so much as there is now a list available... if you can afford to visit.

This brings me neatly to the next problem, cost. Returning to the Manx self-catering cottage this year, is actually going to cost more - because the ferry fare has gone up 30% to £350 - than a fortnight in a five star hotel in Vancouver, including the airfares. A recent night's stay in a hotel in Kendal, which was supposed to be wheelchair accessible but actually had two stair lifts (just as well that my wife can transfer) cost us over £120 including the evening meal. We stayed in a five star hotel in Seattle last autumn for less than that, and that included the use of a chauffeur-driven limo.

So, forget all that extra sunshine, the cost of a UK holiday is likely to be a good deal more than one in America or Spain, even if you can find a hotel which is prepared to take somebody with your disability. I wonder if this is why fewer Americans are visiting Britain these days; after all, they don't much like being ripped off either.

Of course it is not all bad, there are some charities such as Arthritis Care who have accessible hotels, and some companies too. In addition there are one or two activity breaks at such places as Kielder, and one or two of the big chain hotels. If only hotels would add a little wheelchair symbol to their ads, we would know that they were suitable. Unfortunately even Saga fails to do that. So, instead of just picking up a brochure, you spend hours on the telephone, trying to find a suitable hotel, Or if you don't, your travel agent does. Then, having found one, you discover on arrival, that the receptionist did not quite tell you the whole truth! You would think these hotels don't want the ten million registered disabled to use their facilities!

Oh well, I for one, it would appear, cannot afford a holiday in my own country, so, back to Canada, Spain or the USA...at least we will be able to get into the hotel there!

## CanDo Survey....Two Weeks Holiday Disability Equipment Hire

Are you thinking about hiring a wheelchair or scooter whilst you are on holiday?

We took a look at the costs of hiring these two basic pieces of mobility equipment for two weeks at various locations. Our findings and our results appear in the table alongside.

Please note, prices are only approximate; if you are thinking of hiring equipment, you are strongly advised to check out prices and availability before travelling.

It is also worth remembering that a deposit may also be required by the hirer to cover damage or loss.

| Location                      | 3 Wheel Electric Scooter | Basic Manual wheelchair |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| USA:<br>Orlando               | £ 155 - £ 170            | £ 85 - £ 125            |
| USA:<br>New York City         | £ 100 - £ 175            | £ 70 - £ 100            |
| SPAIN:<br>Benidorm            | £ 82                     | £ 38                    |
| CANARY ISLES:<br>Gran Canaria | £ 150                    | £ 75 - £ 85             |
| CYPRUS:<br>Ayia Napa          | £ 170                    | £ 130                   |
| ENGLAND:<br>London            | £ 100 - £ 120            | £ 50 - £ 60             |

# Roaming in Canada

My husband Terry and I decided our holiday this year would be in Canada. We started to plan our journey and decided we would fly to Vancouver before travelling up to the beautiful coastal town of Horseshoe Bay to catch a ferry north to Langdale on the 'Sunshine Coast'. We would spend four days in Half Moon Bay with our friend George Murray, then make our way back to Vancouver to catch a flight to Edmonton, Alberta to stay with our friends Bob & Cindie Peterson.

Our journey began on the 13th August. We arrived at Glasgow Airport at 8am, checked in and asked for wheelchair assistance. The lady on the checkout couldn't have been more helpful. She told us to report to the reserved seating area below the escalator at 10.30am. A young man arrived with a wheelchair and took us upstairs where we went through all usual checks: hand luggage, passport etc....great! You skip the queue because, as the guy is working he can't hang about. That's what I call travelling in style.

The call came out for those requiring assistance to 'now board the plane'. Terry pushed me all the way to the door of the aeroplane where we said goodbye to the wheelchair and I then relied on my walking stick as we found our seats. We got settled and watched everyone else trying to find their seat. Finally, the door closed and we started moving bang on time at 12.55pm.

It was an enjoyable flight, although a bit cramped; I had to get up regularly to stretch my legs. Seven and a half hours later we landed in Calgary to refuel and let some passengers off. We were there for an hour, before setting off once more for Vancouver, which was an hour's flight over the Rockies. On arriving at our destination we had to wait until everyone else had de-planed before it was our turn.

There was a girl waiting at the door of the aircraft with a wheelchair to wheel me through to passport control and into the luggage reclaim. All the time Terry was with me. He got our luggage and we made our way through customs....no hiccups here, no one was interested in us. When we got through to the arrivals hall we couldn't see George, so I sat on a chair while Terry looked for him. Finally he found him and they came over to where I was sitting. George and his very good friend John had come to pick us up. We headed to Horseshoe Bay to catch the ferry to Langdale. It took us around 40 minutes to get to Horseshoe Bay as the traffic was horrendous.

On arrival we joined the queue for the ferry only to be told that we had just missed one and the next one wasn't for two hours. By this time it was 4pm Vancouver time; midnight in the UK. We left the car and headed into the town for a cold drink and a bite to eat. I had to walk, but it wasn't far and there was a lift in the building, so no stairs for me to worry about.

We whiled away our time sitting in a café watching the seaplanes coming in and out of the cove. Horseshoe Bay is picturesque and relaxing.

We walked back to the car and boarded the ferry



where we got parked right next to the lift which took us up to the viewing deck. The scenery was stunning. Arrival at Langdale was 40 minutes later. It was then a further 40 minutes drive to Half Moon Bay.

The 'Sunshine Coast' is only accessible by ferry; there is no road into it, which makes it all the more delightful.

George lives out in the countryside and when we pulled into the track beside his house there was a deer there, of course it fled when it saw us. Seeing wildlife makes the holiday more special. George tells us that he often gets bears going through his garden....yikes!!! His 'lot', as they call their plot of land in Canada, stretches 750ft up the hillside, where he has over 100 Cedar trees each over a hundred feet tall....his own little forest.

We headed to bed at around 9pm Vancouver time, or 4am UK time. We slept until 5am. George is always up at this time, he made us breakfast while we sat looking over the Strait of Georgia and Vancouver Island. Cruise ships were heading up the Inside Passage to Alaska, another wonderful sight. We chatted until 10am, then we headed out to Brook's Cove where George and his late wife Mary built their first house. The house is built on rocky land and it is still occupied - the views are tremendous. It is not an area where anyone partially disabled or those who are wheelchair bound could explore, but sitting in the car was just as good. After lunch we drove to a place called Irving's Landing which is a small cove further up the coast. Here we had a cold drink and watched while the seaplanes came and went and the small cruisers pattered about the bay. I could get used to this kind of lifestyle.

Next we drove all the way to the very north of the 'Sunshine Coast' to a place called Earls Cove. There were seats, so we chilled with a cold drink and ice cream and watched the ferry coming in for passengers who wanted to go up the Powel River. The car was nearby and the area was suitable for wheelchair users.

The next day (Monday) we went into the town of Sechelt to have a look around the shops. There was the odd disabled parking bay, but nothing like we get at home. However, we got into one and had a look around and I did what I do best "spend money", or so I am told.

It is Tuesday already and time to say our goodbyes to George and head for Langdale and the ferry back to Horseshoe Bay. The 'Sunshine Coast' is what I would call 'Shangri-La'; it is so beautiful and tranquil and is the perfect place for a quiet holiday.

Boarding the ferry at Langdale was inconvenient. We had to walk onto the car deck, then to the lift to take us up to level 5. My walking is very slow and my gait isn't very good, so I found this an ordeal. If I'd had a wheelchair with me it would have been easier. Getting off at the other end was worse. They brought a gangway across to level 5 where we accessed a long corridor to the main building, which seemed to me like it was miles away. Again, if I had been in a wheelchair it would have been no problem. I would suggest to BC Ferries that they try a little harder to make life easier for people with disabilities who are accessing or leaving the ferry.

A lift took us down to the arrivals level where Terry's brother was waiting for us. We drove through downtown Vancouver to get to the airport; it is a busier city than it was when we last visited five years ago. Gastown, which is in the heart of the city is worth a seeing as it is a beautiful place and well worth the time, especially the steam-powered clock. We had a bite to eat in the White Spot Restaurant where disabled access was good, both in the main area and in the outdoor patio area. After a lovely meal we then headed for the airport where we said our goodbyes to Gerard and his wife Myra.

We easily found the check-in desks for West Jet and checked in no problem. The lady then guided us across to their waiting area for those who required assistance. We waited about ten minutes before a chap arrived to wheel me through to the gate. Terry wheeled me down to the aircraft, we sat right at the front, and the access was very easy. After a very bumpy flight (we flew in cloud all the way) we arrived at Edmonton to Scottish-type weather, overcast and raining...it felt just like home. As usual everyone got off before us. I was met at the door by a lady with a wheelchair who pushed me through until we met Bob & Cindie. Their car was parked right at the door, so I didn't have far to walk.

The city of Edmonton is beautiful and worth a visit. Our first day there was spent relaxing and catching up with our friends. The next day we went to the West Edmonton Mall, which is the world's biggest shopping mall, with more than 800 stores, an ice rink, amusement park, sea life caverns and an indoor lake. There were disabled bays at each mall entrance (the UK disabled permit may be used in Canada). We had a seat while Cindie set off to find the information counter where you get wheelchair loan for free and the use of an electric scooter for \$7.50 (about £4.25). Access to all the stores was good, so I managed to spend, spend, spend.

The next day we visited Royal Alberta Museum to see an exhibition of the First Nations people. The building and its exhibits are worth viewing but, on the down side, there are no disabled parking places at the entrance but inside the museum access for disabled people is good and there is a lift to the upper floors.

While in Alberta we visited Elk Island, which is a national park, rather than an island. Access was good for both

those who can walk and those in a wheelchair and the scenery is something else. Travelling back we dropped into the Kingsway Mall. Access to stores here is good and you can borrow wheelchairs.

On day eleven of our trip we headed for Jasper in the Rockies. It is a four hour drive; there are plenty of places to stop for a meal, snack or just a drink. During the drive we saw Mountain Goat, Big Horn Sheep, Wapiti, Deer and Elk. Finally we arrived in Jasper. We were booked in at the Jasper Lodge, which is just outside the town; they have 3 cabins suitable for the disabled. In the evening we drove to Pyramid Lake. There is a disabled bay and easy walking and wheelchair access across to Pyramid Island on the lake. It is worth the visit for the scenery.

The next day we drove up Mount Edith Cavell to view the glacier. There is one disabled bay in the car park, but the paths were not accessible for disabled people on foot or in wheelchairs. You can see the glacier from the car park along with any wildlife that makes an appearance. Fortunately for us a Moose decided to appear and started to graze near where we parked. It is rare to see Moose in the Banff National Park, as there are only 20 in the area. A pack of Wolves had moved into the area a couple of years ago, so they have feasted on them. The Wolves have now moved on so the Moose will grow in numbers again. In the afternoon we drove to Maligne Lake. Disabled parking is next to the visitors centre. The restaurant and shops have easy access and those in a wheelchair can get down to the jetty. The walking disabled can board a cruiser for a sail and guided tour of the lake. After cruising for 45 minutes. You stop at an island called Spirit Island where you can get off and stretch your legs before heading back to the visitor centre. The whole trip takes one hour and forty-five minutes and is worth every minute of it. We even saw Deer swimming and a Bald Eagle.

The following day we headed for Banff and stayed in the Residence Inn in Canmore, 10 minutes drive from Banff. We visited the Buffalo Nations Museum which is an interesting and entertaining way to pass a couple of hours. Once more wheelchair access is available. In the evening we had dinner in Evvia Restaurant in Canmore where the food was good, prices very reasonable and the access is suitable for wheelchairs. We drove up to Spray Lake. The road wound around the mountainside, so the views of Canmore were spectacular. Much of the road is still under construction and a bit scary at times, but it was fun. We also saw Mule Deer on the road, they are so used to humans they didn't even move when you stopped the car.

So here we are now heading back into Calgary for our flight home. It was a wonderful holiday, which was made even better by the amount of wildlife we saw.

Unfortunately the bears didn't appear, but maybe they will next time as we will definitely go back. Calgary Airport is the same as most airports, they make life easier for the disabled and take the hassle out of getting to your departure gate. The flight back went smoothly and it was good to see Bonnie Scotland again... and the family, of course

# Scottish Tourist Attractions

## South of Scotland

Location: Castle Douglas  
Attraction: **Threave Garden**  
Suitable: Wheelchair users - assistance may be required at car park.  
Telephone: 01556 502575

This lovely garden comprises of 64 acres with floral displays all year round.

Location: Dumfries  
Attraction: **Dumfries Museum**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 01387 253374

Largest museum in southwest Scotland with exhibits of the region's culture.

Location: Dumfries  
Attraction: **Robert Burns Centre**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 01387 264808

Exhibition of personal belongings and original documents relating to the poet's later years.

## Edinburgh & Lothians

Location: East Fortune  
Attraction: **Museum of Flight**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 01620 880308

Range of historical aircraft including Concorde may be seen.

Location: Leith  
Attraction: **Royal Yacht Britannia**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 0131 555 5566  
Tour of Royal Yacht and visitor centre.

Location: Edinburgh  
Attraction: **Palace of Holyrood House**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 0131 556 7371

The Queen's Scottish residence and home to Mary Queen of Scots from 1561-67. State rooms and picture galleries are open when the Queen is not in residence.

## Glasgow & the Clyde Valley

Location: Pollock Country Park  
Attraction: **The Burrell Collection**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 0141 287 2550

Superb collection of art works including stained glass, pottery, paintings, Chinese ceramics and sculptures. Collection includes works by Degas, Rembrandt and Cezanne. This is a large display and you may need two or more visits to see it all.

Location: Glasgow Green  
Attraction: **People's Palace**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 0141 554 0223  
Purpose-built in 1898 to house cultural museum with wide range of exhibits depicting Glasgow's past. There is also a conservatory with plants and a cafe.

## West Central Scotland

Location: Falkirk  
Attraction: **Callendar House**  
Suitable: More mobile persons  
Telephone: 01324 503770

Costumed interpreters explain life at Callendar House in the 19th Century

Location: Luss  
Attraction: **Loch Lomond Park Centre**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 01436 860601

Exhibition giving an insight into the wildlife and culture of Loch Lomond.

Location: Oban  
Attraction: **Seal and Marine Centre**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 01631 720386

Seal and marine sanctuary set in pine woodland on the shore of Loch Creran. Multi-level viewing, nature trails and close contact with marine creatures.

## Perthshire, Dundee & Angus

Location: Dundee  
Attraction: **Discovery Point**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 01782 201245

Captain Scott's ship 'RRS Discovery' houses exhibits telling the ship's story. Note: Dundee town centre is very near by...and don't forget to look out for the statue of Desperate Dan in the town's main shopping area!

Location: Kirriemuir  
Attraction: **Loch of Kinnordy RSPB**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 01250 881496

Accessible bird watching hides.

Location: Near Forfar  
Attraction: **Glamis Castle Grounds**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users (Grounds only; house is not accessible).  
Telephone: 01307 840393

Although this turreted childhood home of the Queen Mother is not accessible to those with walking difficulties, if you are nearby, it is well worth a visit to see the beautiful grounds.

## Fife and the East

Location: North Queensferry  
Attraction: **Deep Sea World**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 01383 411880

View the underwater world from a glass tunnel. Come face to face with conger eels, sharks and giant rays.

Location: St Andrews  
Attraction: **St Andrews Castle**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 01334 477196

12th Century defence with visitor centre depicting local history.

## North East Scotland

Location: Buckie  
Attraction: **Drifter Maritime Centre**  
Suitable: Wheelchair users  
Telephone: 01542 834646

Fishing industry and related crafts exhibition with hands-on displays.

Location: Peterhead  
Attraction: **Farming Museum**  
Suitable: More mobile persons  
Telephone: 01771 622906

Aberdeenshire's farming history from 1780s to present day is brought to life in this picturesque steading.

## The Highlands & Skye

Location: Culloden Moor, nr Inverness  
Attraction: **Culloden Battlefield**  
Suitable: Wheelchair users. (NB: Large display area - can be very tiring visit).  
Telephone: 01463 790607

Exhibits, relics and audio visual display telling the story of the 1746 Battle of Culloden. Battlefield may be visited.

Location: Drumnadrochit, nr Inverness  
Attraction: **Loch Ness Monster Centre**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 01456 450342

Examine the legend of Nessie in this unique exhibition of pictures, footage, stories and artefacts located at the loch side.

Location: Newtownmore  
Attraction: **Waltzing Waters**  
Suitable: Assisted wheelchair users  
Telephone: 015406 673752

An elaborate production using a combination of water, lights and music, synchronised to produce thousands of dazzling patterns.

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## MS Awareness Week supported by MSPs

As Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Awareness Week 2009 drew to a close the MS Society Scotland said it is delighted that so many MSPs have given the week their support.

By Friday 1st May a total of 47 MSPs, from across all of the political parties, had signed up to support a motion in Parliament promoting the Awareness week and its theme of misconceptions about the condition.

The motion, tabled by Tricia Marwick MSP for Central Fife, states: That the Parliament notes that MS Awareness Week will take place from 27 April to 3 May 2009 with the theme of misconceptions about multiple sclerosis (MS) and the impact that these can have on the lives of people living with the condition; believes that, as around one in 500 Scots have MS, it is crucial that service providers and the general public have a greater understanding and awareness of MS and how it affects individuals and families, and commends the MS Society Scotland for the work that it does to raise awareness and provide support for people affected by the condition.'

Sherine Krause, Acting Director of the MS Society Scotland, said: "MS Week 2009 has been a tremendous success. Our new awareness campaign is challenging the common misconceptions about the condition, issues of concern to people affected by MS have featured in the media and MSPs have given us their support in Parliament."

"We hope that the week's activities will mean people in Scotland are better informed about how MS affects the 10,500 Scots living with it and what the MS Society can do to support them. But there is much still to be done to beat MS and we would urge anyone affected by the condition to join us in our work by becoming a member of the MS Society."

Please either visit [www.mssocietyscotland.org.uk](http://www.mssocietyscotland.org.uk) or call 0131 335 4050 to find out more about the work of the MS Society Scotland.



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Answers to

Exercise your Grey Matter (page 10)

### **Anagramaniacs**

GREECE; ROMANIA, BELGIUM, HOLLAND, ECUADOR, SWEDEN, NORWAY. Ecuador is the odd one out - the rest are in Europe.

### **Word Ladder**

CATS - MATS - MATE - MITE - MICE

### **Bookworm**

A 5 - B 3 - C 6 - D 7 - E 2 - F 4 - G 1

### **Nature Quiz**

1. African - 2. Four - 3. Gorilla - 4. Larva - 5. Orchid  
6. Willow - 7. Australia - 8. Choose from Dormouse, Bat or Hedgehog - 9. Badger - 10. Fossils

## Editorial Opportunities

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or post to us at: **CanDo, 3 Five Roads,  
Kilwinning, Ayrshire KA13 7JX.**

# CARERS WEEK

## 8th-14th June 2009



Carers... the UK's secret service

Six million people provide unpaid care to someone they know.

During Carers Week 2009, this hidden army will speak out.

The UK's carers are, quite literally, indispensable. By providing unpaid care for someone they know who is ill, frail or disabled, they save the economy an incredible £87 billion.

Despite this - and the fact that 3 in 5 people will be carers at some point in their lives - carers often face a lack of recognition in all areas of their lives. Carers experience this from employers, GPs and social workers, even friends and family.

The main consequence of this lack of recognition is that carers suffer more than they need to. Carers struggle with their finances (Carers Allowance at just over £50 a week is the lowest benefit of its kind), health, job, social life and general wellbeing.

Carers Week will combat this by highlighting and celebrating the incredible contribution that carers make, sharing the positive experiences as well as the more difficult.

**People all over the UK will be taking part in Carers Week and some special events will be taking place. To find out what's happening near you log on to [www.carersweek.org](http://www.carersweek.org) or phone 0845 241 2582.**



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