

**cic**

putting individuals first ...

The magazine for supporters of Community Integrated Care

# You First

**ISSUE 22 - SUMMER 2009**



**Inclusive Movies | Accessible Days Out | Dementia Developments**

# Phil's Foreword



Hello and welcome to **You First**. The summer is finally here and with forecasters predicting months of sunshine (and when have they ever been known to be wrong!), the **You First** team have found some great ways to make the most of our summer. From inclusive cinema screenings (p8-9), to watching live music (p18-19) or enjoying days out to the UK's best accessible attractions (p12-13), there is something for us all to enjoy.

It's been a busy time many of for you, as our eventful community and news pages show (p4-7). One CIC event everyone has been talking about is 'CIC's Got Talent', our version of the popular talent show that many of our Independent Living service users in the North East took part in. CIC Trustees and staff from around the country have all told me how much they enjoyed the event and I can see from the photographs how much fun everyone had (p14-15). I now hear a North West version of the CIC show is already being planned.

Dementia care is high on the agenda for CIC as we look to provide more specialist support for people with the condition. The new government strategy encourages us to consolidate our current good practice and gives us the platform to introduce more innovative and ambitious care and support. Our three page dementia feature (p20-22) looks in-depth at how the new strategy can transform the quality of care for people with dementia.

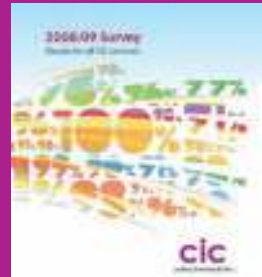
Finally, I would like to congratulate the team at Ferncliffe Road, Leeds whose work to transform anti-social behaviour within their local community won them a national award (p11). This inspiring story is a great example of how our services perform an integral role in the local community.

Have a great summer,

Phil Edgington  
Chief Executive

## Your verdict on us!

Highlights from CIC's 2008/09 Service User Satisfaction Survey are included with direct mailings of this magazine. This year we carried out four separate surveys so we could speak directly to the people accessing our main types of service delivery: Independent Living, Senior Care, Addictions Outreach and Homelessness Relief.



You will see from the brochure that the results reveal exceptionally high levels of satisfaction across all our services and we received positive feedback in all the key areas of our service delivery.

We had an impressive rate of response, with 53% of our service users participating, (the national average response rate to satisfaction surveys is 10-30%). We are thrilled that so many people engaged in having their say on what they want from their services. This means the results are strongly representative of the opinions of the people we support. The survey highlights our successes in providing full, happy lives for the people we support, it reveals the strong bonds between our staff and service users and, despite the high scores in every area, it gives us plenty of ideas for improvement.

If you do not receive this magazine directly please visit [www.c-i-c.co.uk](http://www.c-i-c.co.uk) to request a copy of the brochure and subscribe for free to **You First**.

**You First 21 Competition Winners**  
Congratulations to the winners of our Barry Manilow competition: Claire Holt, Anne McKie, Graham Park, Michelle Dunston, Jean Gardner, Sandra Eames and the Todlaw, Windsor Drive and Hesketh House services.

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**You First** is a free magazine published four times a year. Written and published by CIC.

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**You First** is for you and about you - so write and tell us what you want to see in your magazine:

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The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of CIC.

## Planet Friendly

**You First** is printed on paper that is manufactured from sustainable forests and is elemental chlorine free. Please recycle after reading.

# News

## CIC's a winner!

CIC collected an Award of Excellence for its 2008 annual review at this year's Communicators in Business Awards. Judges at the awards said, "This is a very good piece of work and no doubt your organisation will be very proud to be associated with this project – and quite rightly too."



Staff and residents at Charnwood Lodge in Dumfries celebrated the service's 10th Anniversary on Saturday 30th May 2009 with a 1940's theme. In the glorious sunshine they enjoyed a garden party with cake stalls, tombola's and raffles. To complete the weekend of celebrations, residents enjoyed a performance by a local country-dance children's group.

Merse House senior care home, Dumfries & Galloway, bid a fond farewell to senior support worker Susan Kenny, who retired after 30 years of work. An afternoon tea party was held to celebrate.



The United Nations urge that the Homelessness Scotland Act 2003, a pioneering Scottish law that makes housing "an enforceable right" should be adopted throughout the UK. The UN is troubled by Britain's "chronic shortage of social housing, for the most disadvantaged and marginalised individuals, such [as those] with disabilities."



## Service gets top marks

Broad Lane, Leeds, received a 3 star excellent rating in their recent CSCI inspection.

Congratulations to staff from The Oaks, Stockton on Tees, who are winners of the Employee Forum Excellence Award for their continued support and commitment to service users.

Halton Goals, Runcorn, lived up to their name, when they won a football tournament held between CIC homelessness relief services. Bradley Gray from Belvedere collected the Player of the Tournament whilst Orchard House were awarded the Fair Play trophy. A big thank you to local businesses who supported the tournament: Connexions, Adsa, JJB sports and Best Sports Trophies.



## NEWS JUST IN...

CIC has now successfully completed phase 1 of the British Standard Accreditation for our Environmental Management System. Well done to everyone who has helped us reach our first goal and good luck to the CSR Group who are committed to helping us reach phase 2!

# Congratulations to...

**Karen Sanders, PA to the Chief Executive, who has passed her CMI Level 7 Executive Diploma in Management.**

**Karen Anderson, Service Manager at Community Link Addictions service, St Helens, who has completed her Level 4 NVQ in Management.**

## David pedals to a Cuban beat

Good luck to Amberleigh House service administrator, David Phillips, who is taking part in the Alzheimer's Society's 'Cycle Cuba Challenge'. David will cycle hundreds of kilometres through Cuba to help raise funds to support research into the condition. To offer your support to David visit his fundraising website: [www.justgiving.com/davidirvingphillips](http://www.justgiving.com/davidirvingphillips)



**Many happy returns to Christine McCabe from Bellevue Terrace, Durham, who celebrated her 70th birthday in style with a big party attended by all her friends, family and staff.**

**66** The next Frogstastic Inclusive Club Night takes place on Wednesday 22nd July 2009 at The Frog and Bucket, Oldham Street, Manchester. The club night, for people with learning difficulties, their friends and guests, is for over 18's only. For more information or to reserve your tickets call 07946 424075 or email [herosproject@sky.com](mailto:herosproject@sky.com)



**Would you like to represent employees in your region? CIC's Employee Forum are looking for representatives for Cumbria, Leeds, Leicester, Portsmouth, ICL and Senor Care in Scotland. For more information please contact Karen Sanders at [karen.sanders@c-i-c.co.uk](mailto:karen.sanders@c-i-c.co.uk)**



**The Mayor of Gateshead enjoyed reading 'You First' at the Gateshead May Day fair.**

## Get switched on!

The government has launched a new Digital Switchover Help Scheme designed to provide practical help for the elderly and disabled in the move to digital TV. The scheme is available to people aged 75 and over and people with significant disabilities. People who are receiving income or pension support and/or attendance or disability living allowance will also get this service free of charge. For more details visit [www.helpscheme.co.uk](http://www.helpscheme.co.uk)



Everyone at Seafarers Walk, Portsmouth, would like to say a big thank you to support worker Janet Cox for her tireless efforts to raise funds to adapt the service's garden. Janet recently held a car boot sale, raising over £200 for the service. Also thanks to Ian Ketchell's mum and dad who donated money on behalf of Ian to help re-do the garden.



**Susan Potter, from St Nicholas Grove, St Helens, pictured receiving her first pay cheque from her work as a receptionist at Stephenson's Day Centre.**

# Community



Students at the Rievaulx day centre, Billingham, enjoyed playing the paralympic sport, Boccia, at a tournament held at Headlands Hall in Hartlepool in April.

**Residents at Thorney Croft senior care home, Stranraer, were really entertained by Billy and David, who work for charity, Music in Hospitals. The residents enjoyed singing along with classics such as 'Pack Up Your Troubles' and 'It's A Long Long Way to Tipperary'.**



**Kelly Belgium from Dodman Road, Croxteth, was praised by her tutor at Myerscough College where she studies gardening. Her report said, "Kelly has the unfortunate title of being the only girl in the group! However, this has not stopped her from standing up for herself and fully engaging in both practical and theoretical work as part of her course. Kelly is a very pleasant young lady who is popular with both staff and her fellow students." Well done Kelly!**



Donald Campbell, Bill Anderson and Ken Apps from Carlingwark, senior care home, Castle Douglas, had a day to remember

when they visited the museum of local hero, David Coulthard. The residents loved seeing memorabilia from the Formula 1 legend's career, including the cars he raced at Grand Prix's.

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CIC's services across the country found lots of brilliant ways to raise money for this year's Comic Relief. Everyone at Belvedere donned fancy dress and walked all the way from their homelessness relief service in Runcorn to CIC Support Services, Widnes.



Michael Scally, David Anderson and David Tomlinson from Glenhead Road, Liverpool, raised £103 with their pyjama day.



**Brian Metcalfe, deputy manager at CIC Cheshire Alcohol Service, and his wife, made the trip of a lifetime when they travelled to Kenya. They spent four weeks volunteering at a local orphanage and also met up with the African family they sponsor.**



**Well done to Halton Goals resident, Lauren McMillan, who took part in a Princes Trust programme to help build an accessible garden for people with disabilities. The garden includes raised flowerbeds and sensory plants for visitors to enjoy.**



Residents at senior care home, Amberleigh House, had a fantastic day when they were entertained with a performance of hits from the Music Hall era.

**Ronnie Huspith from Marigold Avenue, Gateshead enjoyed his visit to Disneyland, Paris. He told You First, "It was very funny when I met the Disney characters as they were so big!"**



Harold Prendergast, from Tara House, St Helens, has found his

**Andrew McCrorie from Addison Close, Newcastle, helped at a CIC recruitment fair, giving prospective staff the lowdown on life at CIC. He told us, "Many people asked me questions. I really enjoyed the day and had good fun."**



dream job at Acorn Farm, Kirkby, working with the animals and meeting new people every day.

## Pauline Bonds with colleagues



CIC southern region's newest volunteer recruit, Pauline Bond, has certainly made a big impression during her first 6 months of work. Pauline, who is supported by CIC at Palmerston Road, Portsmouth, is now an invaluable member of the team at the busy Portsmouth regional office, where she volunteers every Thursday.

Pauline believes her role, which includes photocopying, filing and answering the telephone, has equipped her with new skills and boosted her self-esteem. She explains, "Working makes me happy and relaxed. It has given me confidence to do other things at home like answering the phone and sorting meals."

Home manager at Palmerston Road, Pauline Connelly, regularly accompanies Pauline to work and sees all the benefits it has brought her. She explains, "Because of her epilepsy, Pauline hasn't been able to work, so this opportunity has definitely built up her self-esteem. Pauline appears happier in herself and more confident to approach any task. For example, she now feels confident enough to get out of the car and walk straight into the office without needing to wait for assistance."

And it's not just Pauline who has benefitted from the placement. The entire office team are delighted to have another dedicated member of staff join their ranks. Admin Officer, Jo Halt, tells us, "Pauline really helps me with my workload and I always look forward to her visits. We have built up a strong working relationship as well as a good friendship."

# Pete's Pals

**Sitting in the garden centre café, three friends are leisurely enjoying an ice cold glass of coke and fooling about in the sunshine. Pete throws his head back, shrieking with laughter, as his friends Toby and Sam playfully spin him round in his chair. Looking like a young man who is really loving life, Pete gets his breath back and excitedly demands, "Again please!"**

Peter Lawson is 21 years old, and lives with his family in Penrith, Cumbria. Like any other young man his age, Pete is sports mad and enjoys swimming, bowling and horse riding. He also enjoys a busy social life with friends, going on day trips out, visits to his favourite fast food place, as well as nights down at his local pub and social centre, The Rainbow Club. "Pete likes to make the most out of every day and he loves to be around other people," his mum, Ann, tells **You First**. "That's why it's so important to us that Pete receives the kind of support that enables him to get out and about, meet new people, and just enjoy his life." It was Christmas 2007 when Pete's family started to look for a care provider that would be able to deliver the flexible support that would allow their ambitious son to achieve the lifestyle he wanted.

"We were aware of CIC, as they support Pete's best friend and we wanted something similar for our Pete," explains Ann. As Pete had already struck up a good friendship with his best mate's key worker, Toby Jackson, the family approached CIC to ask if Toby would also be able to provide similar support for Pete.

"It was important to us that Pete had flexibility in terms of where he went and what he did, but of equal importance was making sure that Pete's care was consistent, as routine is really important to him," explains Pete's dad, also called Peter.

Having struggled to find the consistency of care they needed in the past, Pete's family are thrilled that 18 months on, he is supported by a team of "friends" Michelle Parkin, Lorna Burns, Sam Sowerby, Julia Gittins and of course, his pal Toby.

"Every day holds something different for Pete,"

explains support worker, Michelle. "If we're not down at the day centre hanging out with the other guys, playing music, dancing or painting, we'll be at the local pool or horse riding, which Pete just loves. Anytime he is out of his chair, and totally free, that's when Pete is at his happiest."

"It's an absolute joy to support Pete," says Toby. "He's got a really wicked sense of humour, and forever has us in stitches. But as well as being fun, it's really satisfying to support someone who knows exactly what they want, and what they don't want. If Pete's not happy, he'll let you know. So every day, I know I'm providing the care and support that's right for Pete. For me, that's what this job is all about."

And it seems like having this kind of control over his life has really brought out the best in Pete. "Pete's really come on a lot since I first met him," says Toby. "His confidence has grown and he gets on with people better than ever. He can still be a little shy around new folk, but once he gets to know you he's full of hugs and kisses!"

And both Pete's mum and dad agree, "Pete has come on leaps and bounds since joining CIC. Nowadays, it's rare you'll ever see our

Pete without a big smile on his face. We used to worry about him so much, but now we know that he's settled and happy with the support he receives, we can relax a little."

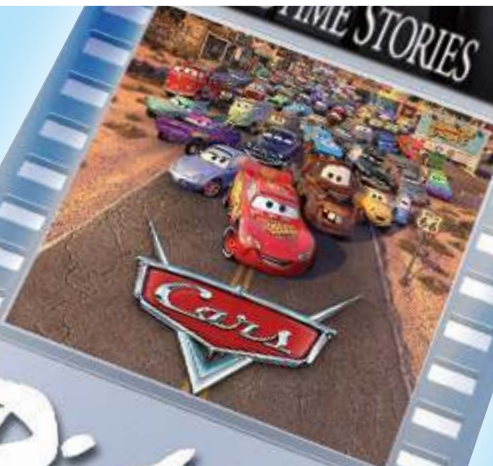
**Best mates: Pete and Toby.**

**"Nowadays, it's rare you'll ever see our Pete without a smile on his face."**



# Reel inclusion

A unique partnership between the National Autistic Society and Picturehouse Cinemas has paved the way for greater social inclusion for individuals on the autistic spectrum. Picturehouse House cinemas hold regular autism friendly screenings that allow people on the autism spectrum and their families, friends and carers, to enjoy watching films in an environment that suits their needs.



Picturehouse

The National Autistic Society







**Dominic Scriven, assistant manager at Fact Picturehouse Liverpool, explains, "We try to cater for the whole autistic spectrum. We have raised lights because some people with autism have light sensitivities and reduce the volume to make it a better experience for people with aural sensitivities. People watching the film are free to move about, talk to their families or take a break if they need to. Basically, we want the cinema experience to be as enjoyable and comfortable as possible."**

Distinguishing themselves from your regular multiplex, Picturehouse Cinemas have a decidedly less corporate approach than your average cinema chain. Screening both blockbusters and independent films, Picturehouse aim to attract diverse audiences.

Dominic explains, "The FACT Centre has a real community feel. We want to be inclusive to everyone in our local community, so we believe that our autism friendly screenings are hugely important."

The screenings were introduced in recognition of the fact that many families with autistic children cannot enjoy going to the cinema together. Some autistic children find the loud volumes or dim lighting at cinemas uncomfortable and parents are often anxious that their child may disturb other viewers.

Dominic explains, "Autistic children, like all people, deal with what they see in a film in many different ways. Some might be content to sit and watch the film, others might laugh their heads off or scream with excitement. Our screenings let them react in a way that is comfortable to them."

**"Going to ordinary cinema showings is harder. I felt much more relaxed knowing that no one was judging us or being disturbed."**

This was certainly a huge plus for Debi Henderson, who took her 14-year-old daughter, Philippa, to see an adapted screening of the family friendly animation, 'Cars'. Debi tells us, "The best thing about the screening for me, was the fact that you could talk with your child and not offend other people watching the film. Philippa struggles to sit down for long periods of time, but at this showing she was fine to move about as she wanted." Debi added, "Going to ordinary cinema showings is harder. I felt much more relaxed knowing that no one was judging us or being disturbed."

Caroline Hattersley, Head of Information, Advice and Advocacy for the National Autistic Society furthers Debi's point, saying, "Autism is a serious, lifelong and disabling condition that is much more common than people think. For families affected by autism, trips to the cinema can often be very difficult due to a lack of

help, support and understanding." She added, "It's fantastic that Picturehouse Cinemas have recognised their specific needs and are giving them the opportunity to enjoy a fun family day out."

Dominic believes the success of the showings can be attributed to great partnership work between Picturehouse Cinemas and the National Autistic Society. He tells us, "The National Autistic Society has supported us with information and education so we can learn more about providing the best possible service to people with autism. They are always available to give us any advice that we may need."

Recognising what an important resource the screenings are to families supporting children with autism, Dominic would like to see them develop further. "We have only introduced the screenings at FACT this year and already have a good number of families who come to them. I'd like to see us hold them more regularly and have even more families attend." He added, "We know how important the screenings are when parents tell us how happy they are, that they can do a 'day to day activity' that would otherwise be a closed door to them. That gives us a big motivation to take them further in the future."

**Autism friendly screenings are shown at Picturehouse cinemas across the country, including in CIC service areas such as Liverpool, Aberdeen and Edinburgh.**

**To find your nearest showing visit [www.picturehouses.co.uk](http://www.picturehouses.co.uk)**

## **PRIZE DRAW**

**We have a pair of tickets with complementary refreshments to give away to any autism friendly showing at a Picturehouse Cinema. Send your contact details to [john.hughes@c-i-c.co.uk](mailto:john.hughes@c-i-c.co.uk) or to the address listed on page 3. Closing date, August 21st 2009.**

**Love going the movies? The CEA Companion's Concessionary Card entitles carers accompanying a person in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or attendance allowance to the movies, to a free cinema ticket.**

**Call 0845 123 1292 or visit [www.ceacard.co.uk](http://www.ceacard.co.uk) for details.**

# Care for a Drink?



## Are carers more likely to develop a drink problem? A recent report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation warns that the amount of alcohol consumed by those aged between 45-64 has doubled in less than 15 years.

The report, **'Drinking in the UK: An exploration of trends'** (released 6 May 2009), suggests that the pressure of caring for elderly parents may be a factor for this generation's increased drinking.

Whilst trends show young men are binge drinking less, but women are binge-drinking more, it is the baby boom generation's drinking habits that have hit the headlines. Caring for older relatives is 'driving the middle classes to drink' ran the Daily Telegraph.

Dubbed "babyglomers" by researchers, the pressures of caring for elderly relations, combined with the sense of loneliness when children leave home to go to university, has caused a change in role that is difficult to adjust to, causing this generation to turn to drink.

The recommended limits are 14 units a week for women and 21 units a week for men. The report found that the average number of units drunk by 45 to 64 year olds rose from 5.3 units a week, or two and a half standard glasses of wine, to 9.9 units, or almost five glasses, between 1992 and 2006.

More than three million people in the UK are estimated to be helping their parents financially after many pensioners lost out following the recent drop in interest rates. Millions more provide care in their own homes for relatives who cannot look after themselves.

President of the Royal College of Physicians, Ian Gilmore, told the Daily Telegraph: "We know that women balancing very difficult lives often turn to alcohol at times of stress. This can happen if they are under the pressures of looking after older relations, especially if they become socially isolated and do not find it easy to leave the house."

CIC's acting lead manager for Addictions and Homelessness services, Hayley Thompson, confirmed that there has been an increase in women carers seeking support. She said, "In our services, we are treating a growing number of people, especially women in the age group that have caring responsibilities and are increasingly using alcohol as a coping mechanism."

**"In our services, we are treating a growing number of people, especially women in the age group that have caring responsibilities and are increasingly using alcohol as a coping mechanism."**

However, Hayley is confident that given the right support early enough, people can be helped. "CIC Addictions services take a holistic approach to treatment, recognising that to assist a person to reduce their alcohol use you need to find and remove the underlying issues which caused the stress initially. In order for the

treatment to be effective, all aspects of a persons life including, health, wealth, education, employment and social networks are explored. This helps the individual to put together a new set of coping strategies to enable them to engage with some meaningful activities in place of alcohol."

A range of treatments and support solutions are considered. For example the use of biophysical solutions (non-invasive acupuncture) may be offered as a positive way of reducing stress and anxiety.

Hayley adds, "Early intervention often sees people who are drinking in a harmful or hazardous way reduce their consumption to safe levels."

"CIC welcomes the decision by the Government to roll out the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme (IAPT) as this will help in the fight to reduce the harm done by alcohol abuse."



# A growing understanding

**At Ferncliffe Road, Leeds, CIC home manager, Lynda Whitehead, looks on proudly as local schoolchildren happily help service users and staff develop a sensory garden. This harmonious scene is proof that a compassionate approach to combating anti-social behaviour really works and is the reason the service recently scooped the top prize at the prestigious 2009 ASB ActionNet Awards.**

For ten years, the Independent Living service had experienced episodes of anti-social and criminal behaviour at the hands of local school children (usually of primary school age).

This harassment would be upsetting for most people, but given the delicate and complex needs of the vulnerable adults at this service, this was a source of huge distress and anguish for them.

The situation escalated in December 2008 when children set fire to the bushes at the front of the property. Lynda recognised that immediate intervention was needed to protect everyone at the service. She contacted the local primary school and was referred to their Children's Co-ordinator.

Believing that their actions were borne out of ignorance, rather than malice, Lynda sensitively arranged for the children responsible to meet the people they had harassed, to learn more about vulnerable people within society.

Following the meeting, the children expressed regret for their behaviour and wanted to make amends. They have since become regular visitors to the service and have invited the residents to their end of term play, as well as volunteering to help build a sensory garden for the residents to enjoy.

## A sense of community

The judges at the national awards, which recognise work done by housing and community support providers, praised the team's method as "an excellent example of community cohesion at work.. encouraging communities to value and respect each other." Judges also noted how "refreshing" it was to see anti-social behaviour problems being solved with a "human approach".

Winning the award ahead of an impressive shortlist of national organisations, Lynda said, "We recognised that these young children were vulnerable people too. We wanted to avoid ASBO's or other legal remedies, because we felt that this approach could lead to a vicious cycle of bad behaviour and recrimination. Instead, we built a relationship with the local school and parents, so that those responsible were educated, not just reprimanded. By doing so, we achieved a better sense of community spirit and hopefully taught the children values which will stay with them for the rest of their lives."



**Above: The children help build the sensory garden. Below: Lynda Whitehead and Children's Co-ordinator, Lynn Dove, proudly show off their award.**



# Have a Staycation!

This summer is set to be a scorcher and with holidays abroad becoming increasingly expensive, many of us will be enjoying a 'staycation'. And why not? Britain has sights, culture and events to rival anywhere in the world!

With so much choice, you'll be glad to know that the second edition of 'The Rough Guide to Accessible Britain' has just been released, filled with information on 175 of the UK's best disability friendly attractions.

From museums to monkey rescue centres, The Rough Guide is packed with inspiration for great days out. Here are a few of our favourites...

## Windermere Lake Cruise, Cumbria

The breathtaking scenery of the Lake District is the perfect spot for a bit of rest and relaxation, and there is no better way to take in the views than on a Windermere Lake Cruise. The boats have access ramps to take you on deck and are roomy enough for wheelchairs to navigate comfortably. Whilst there are no accessible toilets on board, these are available pierside at each destination.

Visit [www.windermere-lakecruises.co.uk](http://www.windermere-lakecruises.co.uk) or call 015394 43360.



## The Albert Dock, Liverpool

The Albert Dock is recommended to anyone visiting Liverpool. Situated on the banks of the Mersey, it is the perfect place to enjoy a relaxing summer's day. Visitors to the Dock complex can enjoy its fascinating museums, numerous bars and restaurants and even look at artwork by the likes of Picasso and Dali at the Tate Liverpool.

Music fans will love the Beatles Story, which charts the history of Liverpool's finest export and the newly built Echo Arena, which

this summer will be hosting performances from the likes of Westlife and the Britain's Got Talent finalists. ([www.accliverpool.com](http://www.accliverpool.com))



## The Eden Project, Cornwall

The Eden Project is a 'botanical theme park', home to amazing plant life from across the world. Inside its giant round greenhouses called 'biomes', you'll experience what it is like in the rainforest, see plants that move when touched and even plants that can grow a metre a day. From orchids to venus fly traps, the Eden Project has it all!

The Eden Project is fully accessible for wheelchairs, has trained volunteers to provide any assistance

you may need and offers free entry to carers. See [www.edenproject.com](http://www.edenproject.com) or call 01726 818895.



## Loch Katrine, Stirling

Sample the spectacular Scottish scenery and some marine history, by taking the Sir Walter Scott steamship across the beautiful Loch Katrine. The 110-year-old steamship gently cruises along the loch, giving you plenty of time to enjoy the idyllic view of the mountains of the Trossachs. The Sir Walter Scott has recently been converted to include an accessible toilet and improved access for wheelchairs.

Visit [www.lochkatrine.com](http://www.lochkatrine.com) or contact 01877 332000 for more information.



## The Scottish Football Museum, Glasgow



The Scottish Football Museum, based in Hamden Park Stadium is a must for football fans. The easy to navigate museum charts the history of the beautiful game in Scotland in an interactive and fun way and is full of fascinating memorabilia. See [www.scottishfootballmuseum.org.uk](http://www.scottishfootballmuseum.org.uk) or call 0141 616 6139.

## Low Bairns Nature Reserve, County Durham



Situated on the banks of the River Wear in West Durham, the Low Bairns Nature Reserve will be home to spectacular migrating birds this summer. A nature lover's paradise, the wetlands are also home to kingfishers, otters and roe deer. The course of the reserve has level paths and viewing hides with low windows, so people in wheelchairs can see all of the action. See [www.durhamwrf.co.uk](http://www.durhamwrf.co.uk) or call 01388 488728.

## The O2 Arena, London



staff, plenty of disabled parking and great views, the O2 leads the way when it comes to accessibility. ([www.theo2.co.uk](http://www.theo2.co.uk))

If however, you prefer your entertainment to be a little more intimate, a West End show could be just for you. Many theatres have great accessibility and regularly host audio described, captioned or sign language interpreted performances (see [www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk](http://www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk) for show times). We recommend Sister Act the Musical, the hilarious adaption of Whoopi Goldberg's classic film. ([www.sisteractthemusical.com](http://www.sisteractthemusical.com))

The O2 Arena is in a league of its own when it comes to attracting the biggest stars. This summer, everyone from boyband Boyzone to boxer Amir Khan will be thrilling fans at the 22,000 capacity arena. With well trained

## Alton Towers, Staffordshire



Prefer an adrenaline rush to a relaxing break? Then Alton Towers could be for you. Disabled visitors to the theme park (with up to two carers) are entitled to priority passes, meaning that you can get straight to the front of the queue for

the white knuckle rides and make the most of your day.

Accessible Britain says, "Access to some rides is challenging and the level of enjoyment you'll get from Alton Towers depends to some extent on your own abilities. Oblivion and Nemesis are relatively easy to get onto, whereas the Flume and River Rapids are a little trickier and might need more consideration. Rides such as Rita Queen of Speed, Runway Mine Train and the infamous Air will have your stomach performing summersaults." ([www.altontowers.com](http://www.altontowers.com))

**The Rough Guide to Accessible Britain is available FREE to Blue Badge holders by calling 0800 953 7070, or order online at [www.accessibleguide.co.uk](http://www.accessibleguide.co.uk)**

**The book is not available in the shops.**



## A glittering gallery of stars...

Kevin Anderson from Rosedale  
As Elvis singing 'Blue Suede Shoes'

Claire Thomas from Rievaulx day centre  
As Liza Minnelli singing 'All That Jazz'

Deborah Morrison from Stone Street Flats  
Singing 'Mandy' by Westlife

Anne Marie Stokoe and Julie Hughes  
from The Oaks  
As Kenny Rogers And Dolly Parton  
singing 'Islands In The Stream'

Phillip Brand from Rievaulx day centre  
As Will Young singing 'Evergreen'

Candy Atkinson, Ian Scott, Alice Phillips,  
Tracey Davis and Annette Cain from West  
Lodge  
Performing 'The Music Man'

Wayne Manning from Halcyon Place  
As Robbie Williams singing 'Angels'

Martin Pears and Craig Sterling from Abroath  
As The Blues Brothers

Paul O'Callaghan and Paul Jackson From  
Rievaulx day centre  
Performing as Michael Jackson

Robert Tallack, Stewart Dean, Alison  
Dickinson, Danny Avery, Carol Malone  
and Nicola Dunn from Broomside  
Are Abba

Elizabeth McLone From Rievaulx day centre  
Singing 'Edelweiss'

John Kelly From Halcyon Place  
As Freddie Mercury singing  
'I Want To Break Free'

# CIC's Got Talent!



As the spotlight dimmed, Elvis was waiting eagerly in the wings, ready to hit the stage. In the audience, Freddy Mercury chatted to his friends and family, a pair of Michael Jackson's shared a laugh with Liza Minnelli, whilst Kenny Rogers and Dolly Parton tucked into a packet of flumps. After months of preparation, 'CIC's Got Talent' had finally arrived and the stage was set for a great night of entertainment.

The event, which took place in April at the Borough Hall, Hartlepool, was the brainchild of CIC's North East social inclusion group, 'Step up to Life', as a way of showcasing the talents of our service users. And it certainly did. The sold out crowd of 150 friends, family and staff from across the country, were wowed by energetic performances of everything from music from the Blues Brothers through to Will Young hits.

Caroline Bairstow, service manager for CIC's Independent Living Services in the North East explains, "'CIC's Got Talent' not only showcases the musical and dancing talents of our service users, but also the enthusiasm and creativity that they and their support staff have dedicated to devising their brilliant routines and costumes."



John Kelly, of Halcyon Place, Gateshead, had the crowd on their feet as he mimicked Freddy Mercury's classic routine from the video of Queen hit 'I want to break free' complete with a vacuum cleaner and a curly wig, and the staff and service users from West Lodge struck a chord when they performed 'I am the Music Man' in specially made costumes decorated in musical notes.



Perhaps the hardest task of the evening belonged to Shirley Wrigley, of Elwick Road flats in Hartlepool and Elaine Bainbridge, of Cookson Court, Penrith, who had to judge the winner after an evening of superb performances. Shirley told us before the big winner was revealed, "It's been a great evening. It was very close and it wasn't easy picking the winner, everyone did so well!"

However, there could only be one winner and Deborah Morrison from Stone Street, Gateshead, deservedly took home the winner's trophy following her stunning rendition of Westlife's 'Mandy'. A clearly shocked Deborah told the crowd, "I can't believe it, this is a dream come true!", before answering calls for an encore.

Amongst those clapping loudest were CIC trustees Frankie Robertson and Jean Clement, who made the journey from Cheshire to show their support for the event. Frankie said, "Watching 'CIC's Got Talent' has been such fun. Like all of the trustees, myself and Jean love being out and about, visiting CIC services and our service users, so we were really excited about attending today's event." She added, "We see how talented CIC's staff and service users are all the time, but it was great to see it on such a big stage."

'CIC's got Talent' was an example of all that is great about our charity, an inclusive event that put our service users in the spotlight and celebrated their successes. As with this year's 'Britain's Got Talent', Diversity is always a winner in CIC!





# inspirit

a fresh approach to care

Six months ago, CIC joined forces with North West charity Inspirit Care (formerly known as Manchester Care). Our new teammates provide residential care and domiciliary care services throughout the Greater Manchester area. **You First** takes the opportunity to spotlight the residential services and introduce the new residents, relatives and staff joining the CIC Group.

## The Dell

"This is a fantastic service," says home manager, Sue Lord, "but, that's not to say we can't make things even better!" she laughs. "For me, our partnership with CIC means that we will now have the opportunity to provide an even better service for the local community."

"We are a very community orientated home, with virtually all of our staff coming from within a couple of miles radius, so I really want to make sure we find time to put something back. For example, we allow people from the community to come and do work placements with us to get an insight into what a career in health and social care is all about."

As a Dignity in Care Champion, Sue is keen to get involved in the specialist services which CIC provide. "The merger with CIC means that we now have the opportunity to draw on CIC's expertise in providing specialist care for conditions such as Huntington's and Alzheimer's. I think there's a great fit between the two organisations and going forward, it'll bring great results for service users and staff. It's such an exciting time and I can't wait to see where we go from here."

## Pemberton Fold

Manager Michelle Phillips had been with the previous charity since it was founded. She joined as a care worker in 1991 and has been with it through the highs and lows.

**"We want this service to be a fun, dynamic and energised place to recuperate."**

Pemberton Fold was seen as a new direction for residential care when it was built in 2007. Home to 45 residents, with a specialist dementia EMI providing short stay and respite places for between 15 –20 people, Michelle and her team are proud of the flagship building and work hard to maintain its strong reputation in the community.

## Kirkley

With up to 30 residents staying for anything from a few days to six weeks, things are always on the go at this intermediate care service based in Longsight, Manchester. Providing short term support to people in need of specialist rehabilitation, this service really reflects both charities' commitment to independence and choice in care.

"Whilst residential care is great for those needing long-term support, the people we care for want to and are ultimately still able to live independently," explains home manager Martina Caldwell. "They might have had a trip or fall at home, or have been discharged from hospital and need some extra support, but we are able to give them the care they need to get back on their feet."







Working in partnership with a local multi-disciplinary PCT team, including nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and rehab assistants (all of whom are based at the Kirkley site), staff work intensively with each resident, often producing amazing results.

Martina explains, "There is nothing more satisfying than seeing a resident get up and walk to their taxi home, when only six weeks earlier they had come to us wheelchair bound, feeling scared, deflated and defeated. For me, that's what this job is all about."

But it's not only about the physical efforts to get people back to full health – emotional support is paramount too. "We want this service to be a fun, dynamic and energised place to recuperate," says Martina. "There are days when I'll walk through the lounge and hear music playing, residents dancing in their seats, bingo being called in one corner and, if you

can believe this, people playing on the Wii Sports computer console in the other!" she laughs.

After spending the morning with Martina, it's clear that having a personal touch is what makes this service so successful. "Even though as manager, a lot of my time is taken up with paperwork, I make sure that at least two or three

times a week I switch off my computer and go and eat my lunch with the residents", she says.

### Henesy House

Senior support worker Josephine Walker works at Henesy House a specialist intermediate care home which helps people to get their independence back following an operation or accident.

"People stay for six weeks but can stay longer if they need to", says Josephine. "It is a lovely place to work and we try to make everyone feel welcome. Our chef, Yvonne Thomas, who set up the kitchen when the home opened three years ago, is a great cook and caters for all dietary needs."

### Heartly Green

Like its twin, Pemberton Fold, Heartly Green combines state-of-the-art architecture

with a home-from-home environment. Built three years ago, the 59 bedded home provides residential and intermediate care to the people of Salford. Heartly Green boasts a consulting and therapy room and a large amenities room for residents.

### Longford

Deputy manager Juliet Sahadeo describes Longford as a "lovely home that's in need of a bit of TLC to brighten it up!" The residential care home has 40 residents and 30 staff. Centrally situated in Charlton, Longford enjoys strong links with the community.

### The Peele

Described as a "flagship home", the Peele is an exceptional development. New manager, Mary Crossley, is proud of its impressive and innovative design. The 108 people who live in the Peele or access its intermediate unit, enjoy the benefits of health treatment rooms, a consultancy suite,

sheltered gardens, modern IT systems and even a cinema! Deputy manager Charmaine Gallagher describes the events where all 96 residents get together as the best because they are so "lively."

### Thornlea

Administrator Pam Allen has been working at Thornlea for 10 years and tells us that the first thing that people say about the residential home is how friendly it is. Although there are currently only 24 residents living in the 38 bedded home, the bustle of visitors makes it appear busier. Thornlea is in the centre of the town and has great links with the community, even the nearby pub puts on evenings for the residents.

**Inspirit homes are undergoing a refurbishment programme by CIC and each home will be rebranded within the CIC Group.**



# “It’s part of the struggle of coming up as a band, people taking you and your disability seriously.”

**Music has no boundaries. It can cross all divides and unite people from diverse backgrounds. So why do many people find themselves excluded from the thrill of watching or performing live music, simply because they have a disability? *Attitude is Everything* is a charity that formed to challenge this exclusion and has already achieved huge success with its campaign for change.**

*Attitude is Everything* was founded in 2000, with the aim of ensuring that deaf and disabled people receive fair treatment at music venues, clubs and festivals. Since its inception the organisation has made huge inroads within the live music industry, working with large and small venues and festivals across the UK to improve access for people with disabilities.

Whilst many modern, well-financed venues have good accessibility, it is often the smaller grassroots venues such as pubs and basement bars, where the new bands start on their road to stardom, that fail to provide adequate access. However, ensuring good physical access is only part of the battle as Graeme Griffiths, Business and Operations Manager for *Attitude is Everything*, explains. “Staff attitude is the key. Even if the venue can’t be made physically accessible, there are a lot of attitudinal and policy changes you can make to improve disabled access at your venue.”

To do this, *Attitude is Everything* encourages venues to provide deaf and disabled people with information on their facilities and well trained, positive staff to offer any assistance they may need. “We have a charter of best practice that over 40 venues have signed up to, which

recognises venues that have made strides to improve their access”, explains Graeme. The charter, which has three awards (Bronze, Silver and Gold), commends venues for making the simple changes which can make a big difference to a deaf or disabled person’s experience. They also give venues the aim of becoming fully inclusive by making more ambitious changes such as providing sign language interpreted or captioned shows and integrating disabled people within key positions in their staff team.

In a bid to show the live music industry just how good an inclusive event can be, *Attitude is Everything* set up their own club night, ‘Club Attitude’. The night, which has been held in some of London’s coolest clubs and at venues across the country, encourages both disabled and non-disabled musicians and fans to attend.

Blaine Harrison, frontman of acclaimed indie group Mystery Jets, played at the club night with his band in their early years. Recognising the opportunities that the club night had provided to his own band before they hit the UK charts and the unique ambitions of *Attitude is Everything*, Blaine became a patron for the charity and is working to publicise their cause in national press.

Blaine told *You First* magazine, “Playing Club Attitude was a really different experience. We had people signing our lyrics on the side of the stage, it is completely surreal to see, but in reality makes so much sense.” He and his band back the club’s ethos that deaf and disabled people should be given every opportunity to access mainstream events. “I don’t think people with disabilities should be segregated, everyone should be able to enjoy events together.” Born with Spina Bifida, Blaine knows from his own experience the importance that good accessibility holds to disabled musicians. “(My own disability) is something that we have never made an



The Mystery Jets perform at Club Attitude as their lyrics are signed on stage.



Left to right: Attitude is Everything providing assistance to festival goers; The Mystery Jets - "Everyone should be able to enjoy events together"; a packed out Club Attitude gig; Graham Griffiths at Club Attitude.



issue out of," explained Blaine. "It's been a struggle for me sometimes getting into venues, but we have had to bite the bullet and realise its part of the struggle of coming up as a band, people taking you and your disability seriously."

Building partnerships with organisations such as Festival Republic, the organisers of some of the UK's biggest music festivals such as Reading and Leeds and Glastonbury, has enabled *Attitude is Everything* to push for greater accessibility for disabled people on much bigger stage. They provide advice and assistance to festival organisers in the build-up to events and provide support at disabled campsites and specialist disabled stewards during festivals.

Graham explained, "With festivals you start with a blank canvass - an empty field, so if we have any new ideas about improving accessibility, it is very easy to get them across and potentially for festival organisers to implement them."

*Attitude is Everything's* expertise and advice has been particularly welcomed by Glastonbury, a festival that is leading the way in terms of promoting equality for deaf and disabled people. The festival, which offers sign language interpreting services, shuttle buses for disabled people to easily access different parts of the site, numerous viewing platforms and a fully

equipped disabled campsite, has worked closely with *Attitude is Everything* since 2005.

Claire Elsam, Disabled Access Coordinator for Glastonbury Festival said, "*Attitude is Everything* help me incredibly. Members of *Attitude* give me feedback on things that have worked well and things that haven't, which is invaluable as we are always looking to improve the festival experience for disabled people." Glastonbury Festival's pioneering approach to promoting inclusion has seen them give Club Attitude an afternoon slot at this year's festival, in the eclectic Shangri La fields.

**"We want to break down the barriers to access for disabled people. Our ultimate aim is to do ourselves out of our jobs. It's going to be a long process but we are committed to it."**

Claire said, "It's amazing how many people don't think a disabled person can access a festival. I hope Club Attitude's showcase

will attract all festival goers and open their eyes to the fact that the festival experience is for everyone." Blaine Harrison agrees, "Festivals are difficult, but the fact that Club Attitude has got a stage at Glastonbury, one of the hardest festivals to navigate, is very positive. It really shows the progress they are making."

Blaine hopes that other bands will also join the call for better access, believing that established acts can make greater demands so all of their fans can enjoy



watching live music. "It's up to the bigger bands to do something. It's one thing to say you support a charity and wear a badge, but its something different to commit to making a difference." "We have spoken to our agent and for our next record, we want to establish a network of venues of all sizes where we know all our fans can get in and we would like other people to do a similar thing" said Blaine. "It's not enough for Mystery Jets to say that disabled fans can come to our gigs. There are probably lots of disabled people who don't like our music and would want to watch something entirely different. Everyone has to do something." As the campaign for better access for disabled music fans and musicians gathers momentum, *Attitude is Everything* are hoping to see further advances. Graham concludes, "We want to break down the barriers to access for disabled people. Our ultimate aim is to do ourselves out of our jobs. It's going to be a long process but we are committed to it."



In February the government published its first ever National Dementia Strategy. This long awaited document received mixed reviews. Hailed by some as a 'landmark' step in the transformation of the quality of care for people with dementia, the strategy was criticised in equal measure as a half hearted, inadequate response to what many see as the UK's fastest growing health crisis.

With opinion so divided, **You First** takes an in depth look at the new five year strategy and asks our experts – what really needs to be done in the battle against this frightening condition?

# Spotlight on dementia

"People are living for longer and dementia, in all its forms, has become one of the biggest health challenges we face," explains CIC's North West Senior Care lead manager, Helen Cook. "There are currently around 700,000 dementia sufferers in the UK, a figure which is set to double in the next 30 years." With the promise of an initial £150 million in funding, the strategy's 17 core objectives aim to make significant improvements to dementia services across three key areas: improved awareness; earlier diagnosis and intervention; and better quality of care.

## Stigma and fear

The perception of dementia remains a stumbling block in the battle against the condition. Fear, stigma and lack of knowledge prevent many people from seeking help with their symptoms, thus deterring early diagnosis.

The debate surrounding whether dementia is a physical or mental health issue seems to add to the problem. Although classed as a mental health condition, largely due to the psychiatric symptoms sufferers present, dementia itself causes physical deterioration of the brain, creating problems with memory loss, thinking and reasoning. With mental health issues having historically been regarded as the 'poor relation' in the health arena, dementia seems not to have received the recognition it deserves.

A recent Alzheimer's Society report, *'Dementia – Out of the Shadows'* (2008), also found that perceptions about the

condition are still overwhelmingly negative, with many sufferers believing others see them as inadequate, incapable, useless, and even mad.

With dementia taking on average three years to be diagnosed, sufferers and their families often face an agonising, confusing and frustrating wait for answers. Couple this with horror stories about late or incorrect diagnosis (including trips to the doctor only to be told that 'forgetfulness' is something which comes to us all)

and it is no wonder that improved awareness and earlier diagnosis are at the top of the government's agenda.

Plans are now afoot for every GP in Britain to be trained to spot the first signs of the condition, for every hospital to have a trained senior clinician with special responsibility for dementia care and for dedicated memory clinics to be set up in every town in England. This will allow for early diagnosis and the prescription of drugs and therapies which can delay progression and maintain patients' independence for longer.

"Early diagnosis will afford patients the opportunity to better plan their futures, particularly in terms of their care and finances," comments Helen Cook. "However, there is a worry that there may be an element of the 'postcode lottery' to these provisions, or that they won't be given the

funding they really need to succeed," she adds. "Some critics also argue that as there is no cure for dementia, funding may be better spent on improving the quality of care for those thousands of sufferers in the latter stages of the disease."

## Improvements needed

Recognising that improvements do need to be made in the quality of care available for dementia patients, the new strategy

demands better community services, more accessible and suitable intermediate care, and improved provision in care homes.

Sandra Watkins, CIC's dedicated dementia specialist,

**"To care for someone with dementia can be one of the most emotionally exhausting things a person can experience."**

appointed to help lead the organisation's practices in this area, believes that on the whole, the dementia care currently available is, at best, patchy. "There are some organisations providing exceptional standards of care, but many do not invest the time and money needed. Hopefully, the government's improvement drive will mean standardisation and create a better benchmark in this field," she comments. According to Sandra, the key principles for good quality dementia care are: providing individualised support, ensuring patients are afforded dignity and respect, and recognising the needs of families and loved

ones. "Communication, with both sufferers and their families, is key to achieving all of these goals," she says. "Genuine person centred care can not be achieved without *talking* to patients and their families. This means getting a detailed biography and translating this into a care plan specific to that person, reflective of their likes and dislikes, their personality and their needs." Improved care pathways are also called for, meaning that care homes will now need to better facilitate their dementia patients to access community services such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and district nursing. "We see this as a vital part of the care for our dementia patients and we work hard on building relationships with external professionals who can provide these services on site," Sandra adds.

### Innovative techniques

A stimulating environment can also delay progression of the disease and provide a better quality of care. Sandra advocates, "We employ a range of techniques at CIC including music therapy, reminiscence sessions and life story work, as well as in-house 'snoozelems' - sensory relaxation rooms which incorporate light and sound therapy. We've also started a new programme called SONASapc in which small groups with varying advancements of dementia follow an audio programme that takes them on a sensory journey - they sing songs, taste new or familiar foods, smell different things and touch unusual or interesting objects, all to evoke the senses. The programme has been hugely successful, with even the most advanced dementia sufferers showing an amazing reaction to it."

As well as activity, physical environment has a significant role in the wellbeing of dementia sufferers. Nigel Kendrick, CIC's property surveyor, has recently completed a course at the world renowned Sterling Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC), looking at best practice in building design and environment for dementia patients.

"Creating the right environment for dementia patients is vital; it can help avoid confusion,

safeguard residents and generally create a more uplifting environment for both patients and staff. Good design helps support residents to retain function and skill by maximising autonomy and control over their own environment."

Running the course was Colm Cunningham, Director of Operations at DSDC, noted as being the driving force behind a new buildings audit tool, which assesses the physical environment provided for dementia sufferers to facilitate a better quality of care. "The course demonstrated simple and easy ways of making a care home more

### "Genuine person centred care can not be achieved without talking to patients and their families."

dementia-friendly" explains Nigel. "It's all about making lots of small changes which together, make a big difference. So for example, using contrasting colours in bathrooms, or on dining room tables, to allow dementia patients to more easily identify objects; painting doors on a long corridor different colours and not using very 'loud' patterns on carpets or curtains. Some of these suggestions are things which we already do in our homes, but there were lots of things we simply hadn't thought of and will now look to implement."

As well as physical changes, assessing noise and light levels also helps create a therapeutic ambience for people with cognitive impairments.

"The key is to achieve a balance of sensory stimulation," says Nigel. "We've recently commissioned an external design consultant to formulate a design scheme for all of our care homes which will reflect best practice in this area, and incorporate items which are specifically suitable for our dementia residents."

### Seeing the person

According to Sandra Watkins, "respect and dignity" need to go hand in hand with these good practices. "Too often people fall

into the trap of seeing the dementia, not the person," explains Sandra. "At CIC we have at least one NHS registered 'Dignity Champion' in each of our homes, so all our staff understand that dignity means treating people how they would want to be treated themselves. This can include anything from giving patients choice and control over their care, to simple home comforts that make all the difference such as clothes patients choose themselves and nice crockery and bed linens. The things a person enjoyed before they came to stay in our care." Sadly, as it is a progressive neuro-generative condition, 'end of life' care inevitably forms part of the support given to dementia sufferers. A 2007 National Audit Office investigation into the quality and cost effectiveness of services for people with dementia concluded that end of life care is 'limited' and services are not being delivered 'consistently' or 'cost effectively'. In response to such criticism, the Department of Health published its 'National End of Life Care Strategy' in 2008, the principles of which are reflected heavily in the new dementia strategy.



Julie Cowen, CIC's Senior Care lead manager for Scotland said, "The strategy addresses this issue and means we will see better practices developing, including patients having more choice and control over how they are cared for in their final weeks or months of life."

"All of our homes follow the Gold Standards Framework, the government's programme aimed at achieving best practice in supporting people near the end of their

# Dementia special report

lives. Several of our homes are even in the process of applying for Gold Standard Beacon Status, the highest possible rating for end of life care, so it really is something we put a lot of energy and commitment into." She adds.

The government wants to see such practices rolled out across the country, and recognises that better levels of care can only be achieved through a more informed and effective workforce for people with dementia. Julie agrees, "At CIC, all staff receive basic dementia awareness training. Additionally, staff working directly with dementia patients take part in regular in-house and external training, attend conferences, and share best practice with colleagues right across the organisation."

## Caring for loved ones

However, professional carers still form only a small part of the support available for dementia patients.

Not to be ignored are the hundreds of thousands of 'informal carers'

who care at home for their loved ones with dementia. Many are forced to give up their jobs to look after their relative or friend, saving the government an estimated £6bn a year by plugging the gaps in the social care system.

"To care for someone with dementia can be one of the most emotionally exhausting things a person can experience. Giving families information, holding workshops and linking them to support groups as we do at CIC, goes part of the way to providing the support families so desperately need," says Julie. "Aside from that, more money needs to go to providing families and other informal carers with respite from their role and giving them additional support in the home from professional staff."

Whilst the government has promised to carry out more assessments of the needs of carers, and increase the provision of good-quality, personalised breaks for them, many people are still left wondering how much of the £150m funding, will actually

be dedicated to this vital need. A central aim of the strategy is to develop services which enable dementia patients to stay at home for longer. Whilst this goal is certainly something many dementia sufferers welcome, questions do have to be asked about how, with only £150m in funding (none of which is specifically 'ear-marked' for dementia) these goals will be financially supported, without placing even more pressure on already strained family carers. Criticism over the lack of funding underpinning the strategy, particularly for research, has been raised by many

**"25 million people in Britain are affected by dementia in some form. People want to do something to help tackle it and research is one of the best ways we can do this."**

dementia charities and high profile figures, who have spoken out about their shock and disappointment over the lack of focus in this area. With cancer research receiving eight times more funding than that allocated to research into dementia, it seems that these criticisms are not without substance.

## Research is the key

Kathy Farmer, Director of CIC's Senior Care services says: "CIC are constantly working to ensure we are carrying out the best, and most informed practices of care and we believe that research is one of the primary ways of making sure we are doing this." Reflecting this commitment, CIC have recently joined up with The Academic Palliative and Supportive Care Studies Group at University of Liverpool, to participate in a study exploring end of life issues for people with dementia and their carers. 'Advanced Dementia – what care do patients and carers need' is a three year

PhD study for Project Researcher, Jackie Crowther, a mental health nurse who has spent several years working on research projects into various aspects of the disease. Jackie hopes that the project will help inform local and national policy in terms of end of life care and support for carers.

"The phenomenal response I have had to my appeal for participants proves that the estimate that 25 million people in Britain are affected by dementia in some form is no exaggeration. People want to do something to help tackle dementia and research is one of the best ways we can do this."

For many professionals and campaigners then, there is a direct comparison between dementia's status now with that of cancer in the 1950's, when few treatments were available, fear of the disease was prominent, and patients were commonly not told their diagnosis to avoid distress. Both supporters and critics of the strategy are united in their view that there is still much to be done if the government

is to elevate this condition to the status of other life-limiting illnesses.

It is clear that the public want increased provision for dementia care to become a priority. High profile figures such as broadcaster John Suchet, who has publicly spoken about his feelings of loss at his wife's Alzheimer's diagnosis, and author Terry Pratchett, who has highlighted his own struggles since being diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's, have provided a public face to the private sufferings that many families experience.

But along with this rise in awareness must come support from the government. The new strategy is only the start to facing this growing crisis. There is still a long way to go and success will ultimately depend on whether the government is willing to provide the money needed to properly support its strategy. The aspirations appear to be there, but only time will tell whether it has the real ambition and breath needed to achieve its goals.

# Day in the Life of...

Being a carer is in the genes for Michelle Earle, 22, from Cumbria. Not only has she followed in her mum's footsteps and become a carer for CIC, she also supports Elaine Bainbridge, who her mum supported when Michelle was a child. Michelle joined CIC at 18, and has already worked her way up to the role of Senior Support Worker. This month **You First** asked Michelle to keep a diary of what she and Elaine get up to on a typical day...



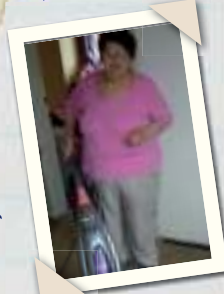
Wednesday 27th May 2009



**9.00am**

Arrive at Elaine's house to take over from the night shift staff. She gives me a cuddle and a big smile. I've known Elaine since I was 10 years old because my mum used to support her. As soon as I left school I joined CIC to work with Elaine, we're like family now.

Today Elaine wants her hair cut and as it's nice out, she wants to take a trip to the local garden centre too. Sometimes we'll go to the Zoo, or take a shopping trip. Elaine loves getting out and about and really lives her life to the full.



**10.00am**

"Let tidy up!" Elaine suggests (much to my dismay!) Elaine used to live in a shared house and she loves having her own place. She keeps her bungalow spick and span. Elaine loves her home and tells me, "I'm going to stop here forever!"

**11.00am**

At the hairdressers Elaine gets a cheerful reception! She's lived in the village for a long time and knows nearly everyone. She enjoys catching up with the girls in the salon.

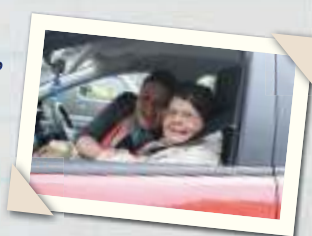
**12.00pm**

Lunchtime, back at the bungalow. Elaine has Prader-Willi Syndrome, which means she's got an excessive appetite, so we need to manage her diet carefully so she stays healthy. "Sausage and mash please" asks Elaine, so that's what we have (along with a few sneaky vegetables to get in her five-a-day!)



**1.00pm**

There's a knock on the door and it's Jean, Elaine's sister. Elaine has two brothers as well, and they're always popping in to say hi too. Jean has come to see Elaine before she goes off on holiday. "She loves her holidays." smiles Jean, "Last year Cornwall, this year the Isle of Wight and next year Dublin and Amsterdam - she's a real jetsetter!"



**1.30pm**

We jump into Elaine's car and head off to the garden centre. We chat along the way about what Elaine would like for her birthday in July. "An X Factor CD and necklace from Argos please!" she tells me.

**2.00pm**

The first thing Elaine wants to do when we get to the garden centre is buy her weekly TV magazine - not exactly green fingers! We have a quick look at the flowers, then head off to the café for Elaine's favourite - a diet coke.



**3.15pm**

Back at the bungalow, Julia takes over from me as I head off to a manager's team meeting. I have progressed quickly at CIC, from starting as a support worker, to recently becoming a senior. My manager Wendy really wants to help me develop my career. I am starting my NVQ level 3 soon, then my registered manager's award. I feel like the sky's the limit!

**4.30pm**

After my meeting I head back to the bungalow. Elaine is with Wendy, interviewing a prospective new member of staff. It's important that Elaine is involved in selecting new staff, as it's her care and her home. Elaine loves her day trips out so the first thing she always wants to know is "Can you drive?"

**5.00pm**

Before I head off for the day, I sit down to finish my paperwork. It's been a jam packed day, but as always, I've enjoyed every minute. I feel really fortunate to do a job that I love, and with people that I love. Helping Elaine lead a full life makes me happy - I wouldn't swap it for the world.



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