

You First

ISSUE 25 - SPRING / SUMMER 2010

A photograph of two elderly men. The man on the left is wearing a grey checkered suit jacket, a pink and white striped shirt, and a patterned tie. He has a wide-eyed, enthusiastic expression and is giving a thumbs-up gesture. The man on the right is wearing a grey jacket over a black and white striped shirt. He has a more neutral expression and is also giving a thumbs-up gesture. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**Doddy
drops by**

Duncan's Downing St Dream | CIC on tour | Meet the new star of Corrie



Phil's Foreword

Welcome to the spring / summer edition of **You First**. We enjoy sharing our magazine with members of our community because at CIC, we believe that having a genuine dialogue with the people who have an interest in our work can benefit us all. Good communication can

inspire and engage, develop great ideas and make ambitions a reality. In many ways, this is the purpose of **You First**. Our magazine is full of great stories from our services and interesting articles related to our sector that we think everybody needs to know about for these very reasons.

But this magazine is just one of the ways that CIC connects with members of its community. When we launched our new Business Plan for the year ahead, we wanted to share it directly with the people who make our plans a reality, our staff. So, the Executive Board and I issued an invitation to CIC Group colleagues, asking them to spend some time with us in their local area, so we could discuss with them our ambitious plans for the future and also hear their ideas about how together we could further develop our charity.

Throughout May and June, we met hundreds of colleagues from every business unit, role and region of the CIC Group. This experience of meeting such a diverse mix of staff to hear their comments and concerns, new ideas and stories of excellent support has truly been invaluable. Thank you to everyone who took the time to attend our roadshow events, your presence was valued and your contribution greatly appreciated (p10-11).

Our 2010/11 Business Plan has 3 key themes to make sure we face the challenges ahead but don't let up on service quality and creating new solutions for people. At CIC we have always delivered excellent and innovative services (like our new Marston Gardens service – p19) and we want this to continue to be our driver, but at the same time we need to respond to difficult economic times ahead. Britain is facing its biggest ever budget deficit and this will undoubtedly impact upon our sector. The new Conservative / Liberal coalition government plan to make bold changes to address this deficit; my article on page 22 details some of the key proposals from their Programme for Government.

It's not just our new Prime Minister, David Cameron, who knows what it is like to walk through those famous doors of Number 10. Duncan Wright, who is supported by CIC in Hampshire, recently fulfilled a dream, when his support team arranged for him to visit 10 Downing Street. His story on page 12 is a true example of how a dedicated support team who are focused on the person they are supporting can achieve great success.

This level of dedication to the people we support and our wider communities is reflected in the many stories from our services throughout this magazine. I know that all of the staff we met at our roadshows would certainly agree with me in saying that this commitment is the cornerstone of CIC and should remain at the heart of our future ambitions.

Have a great summer,
Phil.

Phil Edgington
Chief Executive



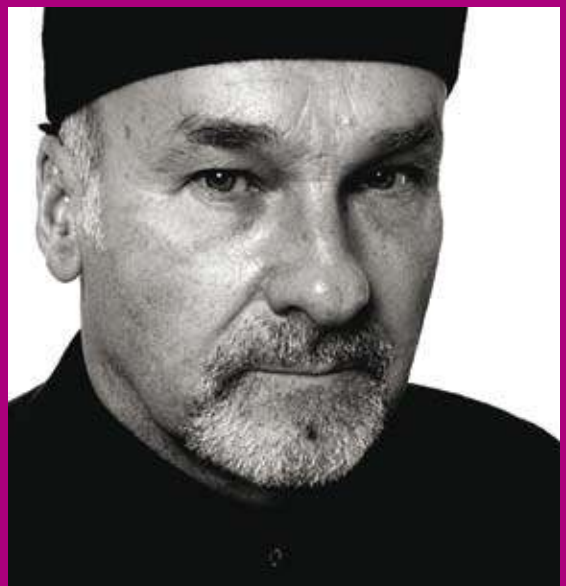
Former Mike and the Mechanics frontman and Squeeze musician Paul Carrack has released the 'Ultimate Version' of his critically acclaimed album 'I Know That Name'. Playlisted on Radio 2 and praised by The Independent as the work of "one of the UK's most underrated songwriters" that is full of tracks that "sound like future standards", this CD is a great listen.

We have two copies to give away to **You First** readers. Just answer this simple question:-

What band was Paul Carrack previously a member of?

- Mike and the Mechanics
- Eddie and the Joiners
- Frank and the Electricians.

Email your answers to our john.hughes@c-i-c.co.uk or send your answers to our address on page 3. Deadline for entries is 1st August.



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cic
— group —
putting individuals first

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What's been happening in your region

Our cover stars: Ken Dodd pictured with Jack Mantle, Cosmopolitan competition winner (page 19).

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

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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 has opened three new independent living services in the North East: Rotherfield Gardens, Beechwood Gardens and Farnley House. Welcome to all of our new tenants and staff - we hope you enjoy being part of our great CIC community.

Volunteers from Sefton Alcohol Services were honored for their dedication and commitment to volunteering in a special ceremony hosted by Sefton's Lady Mayoress. Pictured (left to right): Karen Marsden, Joe Grant, Lynda Schinkel, Patricia Fasoni, Ian Edwards. Back row: Theresa Tennah and Cath Mountain. (Not pictured, Mark Millington and Jo Millington).



WELL DONE to David Phillips, Service Administrator at Amberleigh House, Fazakerley, who has now returned from his epic cycle around Cuba in aid of the Alzheimer's Society. David and his companions raised a staggering £102,000 for this worthy cause.



David (centre with bandana!) and friends having reached their final destination, Havana.

Inspirit Care would like to say thank you to all the staff in their Salford Domiciliary Care team for 10 years of hard work, commitment and dedication to providing excellence in care to the people of the Salford Community.

Elaine, David, and Brenda from The Whinnies, Tyne & Wear, pictured winning the Metro Radio competition for happiest workforce!



Staff and service users from Aberdeenshire enjoyed great success with their recent Safety Awareness Training Day. The event was supported by several community bodies including Grampian Police, the Fire and Rescue Service, the British Red Cross and the NHS Grampian Hand Hygiene Unit and Waste Aware bus. A big thanks to everyone who made this such an exciting and informative day.



Congratulations to Leicester Service Manager, Claire Chauhan, on the birth of her gorgeous little girl Jaya Patricia Simon.

Congratulations to Aberdeen Service Manager Victoria Cunningham on the arrival of her beautiful new baby boy, Harris. Harris is pictured with mum and big sister, Isla.





Rough Guide to Accessible Britain returns

The new updated **Rough Guide to Accessible Britain** is now out and is more packed than ever. The guide is full of fun, exciting and importantly, accessible, days out throughout the UK. The Guide is available for free to Blue Badge and Disabled Persons Railcard holders by visiting www.accessibleguide.co.uk or calling 0800 953 7070. For anyone not eligible for a free copy, **You First** has two copies to give away to the first people to email danielle.chan@c-i-c.co.uk

cic
group
putting individuals first

Over the past few months CIC has taken part in several national and international conferences, focusing on key issues within our sector. First up was the In Control conference held in Liverpool in March, which attracted professionals, services users and their families, from around the country, all looking to learn more about the new Personalisation agenda. Our service managers in Scotland then attended the ADSW conferences, which also took a look at Personalisation, as well as wider issues with the independent living arena. And finally, CIC's addictions services and Bio-physical Medicine service exhibited at the International Harm Reduction Conference, which saw professionals from around the world debate and discuss important issues surrounding harm reduction.

Meet the Government's new Social Care Ministers below and turn to pages 22 and 23 to read our CEO's article on our new coalition government.

- A. Andrew Lansley, Conservative, Health Secretary.
- B. Michael Gove, Conservative, Education Secretary.
- C. Iain Duncan Smith, Conservative, Work and Pensions Secretary.
- D. Theresa May, Conservative, Home Secretary and Minister for Women and Equality.
- E. Eric Pickles, Conservative, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.
- F. Paul Burstow, Liberal Democrat, Minister for Care Services.
- G. Sarah Teather, Minister of State for Children and Families.
- H. Tim Loughton, Parliamentary Under Secretary for Children and Families.



Wolcraig welcome a special visitor

CIC's Wolcraig Project, Sterling, were delighted to be visited recently by Minister for Health, Andrew Lansley CBE. The project, which runs a training programme for people with mental health concerns, worked in partnership with neighbouring project, Open Doors, to welcome Mr Lansley and other political figures from Stirling, for a lively discussion about mental health support services and volunteering. Following the visit Mr Lansley said, "I was very glad to have the chance to meet volunteers and organisers who are doing so much to help people with mental health problems, and reach out to the community of Stirling."



NHS



We are proud to announce that two of CIC's North West senior care homes have achieved the NHS 'Gold Standard' for their end of life care. St Catherines, Nantwich, and St Stephens, Sandbach, will both formally receive their Gold Standard Framework awards in June. The Framework, which is aimed at ensuring care homes deliver the highest standards of care for people in the last years of their lives, is viewed by many as the 'the bedrock of palliative care'. St Catherines Manager, Carolyn Penfold says, "All our residents, no matter what stage of their lives, deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, and have their needs and wishes met. The Gold Standard Framework ensures that all care providers are aiming for these same high standards of care and we are delighted that after months of hard work, our home has been recognised as achieving the highest possible standards in supporting people who are nearing the end of their lives."



Community

Congratulations to Ecclestone Court resident, Harry Harper, 96, and his wife, Eileen, who celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in April.

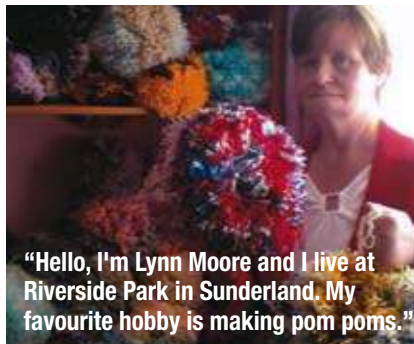


Leicester's social inclusion group GIVA enjoy the May bank holiday sunshine with a sizzling BBQ at Gilmorton Close, attended by over 20 service users and their support staff. Partygoers enjoyed lots of delicious food and activities such as football, tennis, singing and dancing! Anyone wishing to take part in the GIVA group should contact Jazz, Bonnie or Barry at the Leicester Office.



'The Purrfect Present'

Anne Rigby and Minnie Bell, residents at Ecclestone Court, St Helens, gave the *purrfect* present when they visited their local Cats Protection and Adoption Centre to deliver blankets they helped to knit.



"Hello, I'm Lynn Moore and I live at Riverside Park in Sunderland. My favourite hobby is making pom poms."

Keith Dearden, Mark Arnold and Michael Lyon, from Orrell Street, St Helens, enjoy a day at the Turbary Woods Owl and Bird of Prey Sanctuary, Preston.



Betty Wilcox from Maitland Terrace, Northumberland, pictured proudly re-opening her local co-op after its recent refurbishment.



Messages from Munches Park

Surprise parties were thrown in honour of Margaret Brotherson, Senior Support Worker, who celebrated her retirement and 60th birthday and Senior Support Worker Margaret Hunter, who enjoyed a party in honour of reaching 25 years service at the home.

Residents made their own herb garden and Samuel Murdoch was presented with an Honorary Award from his Rotary Club.



Well done to Robert Murray from Arkdale, Peterhead, who raised an impressive £150 after completing an 8 mile sponsored walk in support of Grampain Autistic Society.



Thorney Croft Has The Style Factor

Forget Paris or Milan, it's all about Stranraer Fashion Week! Members of Thorney Croft Day Care Centre were recently treated to a "Fashion Throughout The Decades" catwalk show, with staff as willing models! Members took a look back in time at fashions of years gone by, including evening dresses from the 1930's and Bay City Rollers style tartan trimmed trousers!



An Indian summer at Amberleigh House

Residents, visitors and staff at Amberleigh House nursing home, Fazakerley, Liverpool, enjoyed the sights and sounds of India recently, when they were treated to a demonstration of authentic Indian dance and music.



Home sweet home

Welcome home to tenants from Rowan Avenue and Pine Avenue who are all delighted to be back homes after severe flooding in Aberdeenshire. Thank you to all staff who kept everyone's spirits high during this difficult time.

Jennifer McMurray from Mansfield House, Kirkcudbright, achieved her lifelong dream of seeing her idol, Daniel O'Donnell perform in concert and even received a special handwritten note from Daniel, thanking her for going to see him on tour!



Other tenants at Mansfield house are becoming more eco-friendly. As well as recycling more, tenants have even made their own veggie patch.



West Lancashire Freemasons kindly donated £1,500 to the Leo Project in Southport. The money has been used to invest in a whole range of cycling equipment for the residents to enjoy.



Easter Egg-travaganza!

Residents from St Catherines, Nantwich, eggcitedly took part in the Living Egg Experience. Staff and residents spent two weeks on 'egg watch' looking after 11 chick eggs, waiting for them to hatch!



Schoolgirls from Castle Douglas primary school present residents from Carlingwalk House with a handmade knitted blanket after resident, and former Castle Douglas school teacher, Mrs Reid, taught them how to knit.

What a team!

Although as we enjoy summer, the snowy blizzards of a few months ago might be a distinct memory, Ruth Chapman, Manager at Station Court in Duns, would like to say a huge thank you to all her staff who went beyond the call of duty to ensure tenants' safety and well-being during the big freeze.



THE WORD ON THE STREET

You First gets the scoop on Coronation Street's new star in the making...

Coronation Street is an institution. For almost 50 years, millions of us have been glued to our television sets watching life on 'the nation's street'. The soap is so loved not just because its storylines are dramatic but, at its heart, it understands and reflects every day life and the diverse individuals and personalities that make our communities in Britain so unique. That is why it's so refreshing to see a new character on the street that represents disability in a positive and inclusive way.

Enter Izzy Armstrong, the new girl on the Street: feisty, vivacious, witty, and not to mention gorgeous. Already bagging herself a job in the factory, as well as identifying potential love interests in the form of loveable loser Kirk Sutherland and serial bad boy Gary Windass, Izzy, played by actress Cherylee Houston, has really made her mark on the Street.

You First wanted to find out the background story on this exciting new character, so we caught up with Coronation Street scriptwriter, Jan McVerry.

Jan tells us that the Coronation Street production team wanted to introduce a new character to the show, and after holding diversity workshops, they invited disabled actors to audition for the role of a lifetime.

"As a show, Coronation Street has a genuine commitment to diversity. However, sometimes, that commitment does need to actively be pushed forward," explains Jan. "We planned on creating a storyline which would see us introduce a character with a disability, but equally, we were adamant that the storyline wouldn't work unless we found an actor that was right for the show and right for the story, and that is exactly what we have found in Cherylee," says Jan.

Actress Cherylee, 35, has required a wheelchair since her early 20's when she developed a condition known as Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, a complaint caused

by a defect in the production of collagen in the body.

"We'd seen lots of different actors for the role, but there was something really special about Cherylee. She has a genuine warmth, but also that bit of spark; we knew straight away she would be an instant hit with our audience."

They had found their actor and now it was time to develop the character. For the Coronation Street production team, they were determined Izzy would not be defined by her disability; she wasn't there to highlight a cause or simply make up the numbers, it was imperative that Izzy would enrich the show and become a character in her own right.

"As a writer, there has been a real commitment to making sure that Izzy isn't just the 'token' girl on wheels," explains Jan. "In my view that would be an insult to the actress, to the show and to all our disabled viewers. Yes, Cherylee may be in a wheelchair, but first and foremost, she is a fantastic actress, and that's why she was cast in the role. It's our duty as writers to make sure that we deliver storylines and scripts that reflect and respect that talent and don't just centre on her disability. We have big ambitions for Izzy's character. This is made easier by the fact that Cherylee

"Cherylee is a writer's dream - funny, energetic and sharp but also warm, with that special twinkle in the eye!"



“Be determined in your goal!”

is a writer's dream - funny, energetic and sharp but also warm, with that special twinkle in the eye!"

Cherylee's opening scenes truly demonstrate the writers' commitment to developing Izzy into a major character on the Street.

Izzy burst onto our screens after being duped on an internet dating website into meeting the Street's most hapless character, Kirk. Rather than use his own photo, Kirk sent Izzy a photo of the handsome Jason Grimshaw. However, when she arrived at the Rovers Return expecting a hunk, only to be presented with the scrawny Kirk, Izzy gave her date a tongue-lashing he'd never forget before storming out of the pub. As first impressions go, it was clear to viewers that a feisty new personality had arrived.

"Those first scenes with Izzy were very funny," laughs Jan. "As a writer, you are always thinking about what impact you can make with a character and what their first appearances can reveal about them. It was interesting for us to introduce her along side Kirk's character, who is a much loved comedy figure on Corrie. Straight away, the audience knows that she is going to be someone who is sparky and up for a laugh. I mean, come on, you have to have a bit of attitude if you're going to work in that factory!"

"Izzy isn't just the 'token' girl on wheels...that would be an insult to the actress, to the show and to all our disabled viewers."

So, is it safe to assume we will be seeing a lot more of Izzy on our screens over the forthcoming months? "Yes, absolutely," confirms Jan, "You will see Izzy's own back story evolve, and will see her knitted into the show with the introduction her family, the Armstrong's, who will have strong stories of their own. As well as this, we see a softer side of her personality in her friendship with Kirk and there will definitely be some romance in her future too!"

So now, when millions of us settle down for the evening to watch our favourite show, we can all look forward to watching this new star on the street. Yes she has a disability, but that isn't what we will define Izzy by. The Street's new resident is feisty, funny and full of personality and when we watch her, we won't see a condition, we'll see a character. The writers of Coronation Street, like Jan, haven't introduced Cherylee as campaign piece but as someone who will be a genuine presence on the show. They've seen the person, and isn't that what true integration is all about?

You First met up with the actress herself, Cherylee Houston, to find out more about her journey to the small screen and get some tips for CIC's own budding actors...

YF. Coronation Street celebrates its 50th birthday this year - how does it feel to be cast in one of the nation's best loved TV shows?

CH. It's really exciting to have got a job on such a well loved show, I'm looking forward to all the different things that are going to happen to Izzy over the next year.

YF. Tell us about the audition process for the role of Izzy.

CH. ITV held workshops with disabled actors, where we were invited to present to camera scenes from the show and also a monologue chosen by the actors themselves. Then several of us were invited to a screen test, mine was set in the factory with Julie and Sean.

YF. Were you a fan of the Street before you joined?

CH. I grew up watching Coronation Street. It was one of those TV shows that you were asked "What are you calling for now? Don't you know Coronation Street is on?" if you accidentally rang a friend up whilst it was on!

YF. How did you get into acting?

CH. I went to Lancaster Youth Theatre in my teens and then got my first job through that. A couple of years later I auditioned for drama school and moved to Manchester to study.

YF. Do you feel that it is difficult for disabled actors to break into the industry?

CH. Yes, it's pretty tough currently for disabled actors to break into the industry as currently the same training and employment opportunities aren't available to us as there are to actors as a whole. Having said that it's a pretty difficult for any actor.

YF. Would you like to see more diversity on our TV screens?

CH. Of course. I strongly believe that if we were fully represented in the media, life in general would be a bit easier as the media is a very powerful tool.

YF. Izzy plays a really feisty character in the show - are you similar to her in real life?

CH. Mmm I have my moments! I will and do stand up for what I believe, I think it just takes me a bit more of an internal journey to voice certain things, whereas Izzy reacts and then processes later.

YF. How much input do you have into your character?

CH. Izzy reacts to what the writers have written, however I have learnt that is a two way process as the writers respond to what the actors create with their characters. Of course I have an open dialogue with Corrie regarding certain aspects of disability as we're all currently on a learning curve with Izzy's

presence within the show.

YF. What can we expect from Izzy over the next few months?

CH. Well things will begin to hot up in the next few months as Izzy's family appears.

YF. Do you have any tips for budding actors within the CIC community?

CH. I'd say the best advice is to get involved Go to your local theatre, find out what's happening in your area. The best way is to build experience and be determined in your goal.



CIC on tour!

“CIC have ambitious plans for the year ahead; we want to develop innovative solutions that meet the needs of our communities, to continue to deliver quality services to the people we support and find new ways to be efficient in these difficult economic times. Of course, to achieve these goals, we need the support of the CIC community. That’s why we are travelling the country to discuss our business plan with staff”, said Phil Edgington, CIC Chief Executive, as he introduced the 2010/11 Business Plan to an audience of CIC colleagues in Liverpool.

From Portsmouth to Aberdeenshire, Phil and the team travelled the length and breadth of England and Scotland to meet our staff. An invitation was extended to colleagues in CIC Group to attend one of 22 roadshow events which looked at our plans at a national level, as well as local priorities and successes.

Phil explains, “I know that our staff share the CIC Group’s commitment to the people we support and because of this we want them to have a sense of ownership of our charity and its direction. To reflect this commitment, our business plan for the year ahead is called ‘Encouraging Active Ownership.’”

Part of this ownership is everyone recognising that they have a part to play in delivering success across our organisation, no matter what their role. Phil said, “If you work for the CIC Group your contribution is valuable and makes a difference. This year we have identified three main areas in which everyone can take a fresh look at their work. Our Three Imperatives will help every member of staff in the CIC Group to identify areas for improvement or new creative solutions.” But the roadshows weren’t just about our Executive Board telling staff their plans. The EB wanted a real dialogue with staff to hear about their services and their ideas.

“Over the course of a month, we have met staff from every level of our organisation; colleagues from Independent Living, Senior Care, Domiciliary Care, Homelessness and Addictions services, people who have worked for CIC for many years and people who are new to our organisation”, explains Phil.

“This experience of bringing together groups of staff to discuss their ideas and concerns has been invaluable. It has given us a real insight into the priorities for our services and a great opportunity to engage our staff on the direction of our organisation.

I’d like to thank everyone who attended and helped to organise the events. In particular, I’d like to thank all those who enthusiastically joined in with their own thoughts and questions. We have some fantastic people working in the CIC Group and it has been a real inspiration to chat to so many.”



Manage Well

How can budgets, new business and staff be better managed?



Continuous Improvement

How can you improve the quality of your services?

‘Encouraging Active Ownership’ – a guide to the 2010/11 CIC Group Business Plan is available for all staff to view on our intranet, CLICK.





After the roadshows, Phil asked all of the attendees to give feedback on the event and any ideas they have to help the CIC Group deliver their business plan.

The Executive Board will be acting upon the comments and suggestions received during the day, but we wanted to give you a flavour of the many excellent comments we received about the roadshows...

Ali McRae – Arkdale, Glasgow, Independent Living

"I thoroughly enjoyed the meeting. It was great to get the background facts and figures on CIC. The objectives make it very clear the direction CIC is taking and the role we all have in delivering them. I feel very positive about the year ahead and the contribution me and my team will make."

Joanne Warren – Inspirit Care

"The presentation involved lots of good sharing of information. Everyone who attended will take something from it."

Lisa Newbury – Gardner House, Hartlepool, Senior Care

"It was great for staff to take a look at our strategic objectives and business plans. The events reminded us that we all have a role to play in using our resources wisely."

Karen Anderson – CIC Community Link, St.Helens, Addictions Service

"There were lots of encouraging comments from senior staff. I hope our business plan for the next year is a success. I will be implementing different changes in my service to make sure that CIC has a year of success."

Jeremy Pearson – Morningside, Penrith, Independent Living

"I enjoyed learning more about our strategy and business plan. I have come away with ideas for management, continuous improvement and innovative opportunities. It was good to meet Phil and our directors and see their passion for CIC."

Joanna Kimmitt – Ardenraig Road, Glasgow, Independent Living

"It was great to find out about the future plans for CIC because I want to have a long career with our charity."



New Solutions
What bright, new or innovative ideas do you have to help CIC succeed?



Duncan's Downing Street Dream

Setting off for my big day!

Knowing that Duncan Wright from Hightown Road, Hampshire loves Great British traditions and institutions, his support team, Clive Keele and Peter Marchant wrote to the office of the Prime Minister to ask if they could arrange for him to visit the place that makes Duncan's face light up the most - 10 Downing Street! They were delighted when Gordon Brown's representative sent an invitation that would make his dream come true. Clive tells us about their amazing day...

10.00am

Duncan, Pete and I set out for Richmond station to catch the train to London. It's a cold November day. Although it's pouring with rain, Duncan's spirits can't be dampened. It's clear from his big beaming smile that he is delighted to be starting out on his journey to the most famous street in the country!

11.30am

Train travel has always been one of Duncan's passions - he even has his own model railway track running around his room. Duncan enjoys the changing scenery, the constant movement of people and lights on our journey. Nearing Waterloo station, Duncan excitedly presses his nose up against the window, sensing he is getting closer to his special destination.

12:30pm

We arrive at Waterloo station and grab a bite to eat. Duncan gazes at the busy commuters rushing by, fascinated by all the different people and voices. Although Duncan can't communicate verbally, he lets Pete and I know exactly how he is feeling with facial, hand and body gestures.

1.45pm

We hail a cab to take us to Downing Street. Travelling through the City we marvel at the well-known sights. Duncan squeals with delight as he spots one of London's famous red double decker buses. We are all so excited about our treat ahead.

2.30pm

Finally, we arrive at our prestigious destination. In contrast to the commotion of London, Downing Street itself is surprisingly calm and we patiently wait to proceed through all the important security checks.

The famous chequered hallway

WOW! Think of the big decisions made in this room

The corridors of power!

I'm so excited we're nearly there

2.40pm

Suddenly, we hear a lady's voice behind us, welcoming us to Downing Street. Who is it? None other than Alistair Darling's wife, Margaret Darling! We are all stunned to be welcomed to the street by the wife of the Chancellor to the Exchequer! Mrs Darling is a warm and lovely lady who tells us that she has been expecting us and quickly ushers us out of the cold and into.....No 10 Downing Street!

2.45pm

They say a picture paints a thousands words, and what a picture Duncan's face is as we cross the famous doorstep into No 10! Smiling, laughing and wringing his hands with delight, Duncan is overjoyed to be in the Prime Minister's home.

2.50pm

All the staff on duty give us such a warm welcome, introducing themselves and shaking Duncan's hand. No 10 and No 11 Downing Street (home to the Chancellor) have now been knocked into one and the whole building is decorated beautifully. Duncan is entranced looking at all the lovely décor; he is particularly enamoured with the chandeliers as they sparkle in the light - perhaps we should get him one for his bedroom back home!

3.00pm

Mrs Darling takes us into her husband's personal reception room, where we are served afternoon tea by our own butler. We feel like royalty! Duncan quickly polishes off two cups and a few biscuits! We chat with Mrs Darling and tell her all about Duncan, his life at Hightown Road and CIC.

3.15pm

Our next stop is the Cabinet Room, which is Duncan's favourite room. He is happy and relaxed, enjoying the space this great big room has to offer. It was amazing to think that we are standing in the room where all the big decisions are made!

3.30pm

Next we visit the famous Downing Street staircase, where engravings and photographs of all our past Prime Ministers decorate the wall. Our final stop is the beautiful No 10 garden.

4.00pm

Suddenly we realise the time and can't believe how quickly the day has passed. It's been a long day and Duncan is getting tired so we decide to make our way home.

4.15pm

The staff at Downing Street have been wonderful and we can't thank them enough for allowing Duncan into the Prime Minister's home and making us feel so welcome. Duncan is presented with a bag of memorabilia, which he eagerly clasps hold of. We say our goodbyes and set out on our journey home.

9.00pm

After a long but eventful day, we arrive back home. Although we are all shattered, it's been a day none of us will ever forget. We are all so happy that Duncan's dream of visiting the Prime Minister's home has come true.

Phil's Passion for Poetry

Standing up in front of 70 people at Liverpool's Everyman Theatre Poetry group to read his self-penned poem "Doing a dance in a loony bin," Phil Thomas from CIC's Gordon House, demonstrated not only his talent for writing poetry, but his profound personal courage.

Phil's poem is about his own experience on a mental health ward. The poem is startlingly honest about his feelings at the time he was unwell. The poetry lovers at the Everyman were deeply appreciative of his writing skills.

Phil performed the poem again at a CIC dignity day and again received admiration and encouragement. "It felt great showing other people what I had written and getting such a positive response."

"I started writing poetry five or six years ago and found it a great outlet for expressing how I was feeling." He added.

As a qualified graphic designer, Phil is a naturally creative person and has put his talents to good use before. Whilst at hospital, Phil worked with a production company to write and produce a play which is now shown around the country as a mental health training programme.

For 11 months, Phil has been living at CIC's mental health project Gordon House. He is keen to praise all the staff but credits key worker Jamie Malloy with giving him the confidence to believe in himself again. "Jamie is very supportive and always talks to me straight. I can rely upon him and trust him."

So what now for Phil.

"I like everything to do with the theatre, so I would like to get involved in set design." With Phil's range of talents, writing performing and set design - he could do his very own one man show!

You First www.c-i-c.co.uk **13**





Any fan will tell you that football is not just 'a game'; it's a way of life. But for Mel Young, Director of the Homelessness World Cup, football is a tool to change people's lives.

This annual, international football tournament offers homeless people from across the globe a once in a lifetime chance to represent their country in football and change their lives forever.

"We give homeless people a real opportunity and open doors for them", explains the tournament's founder, Mel Young.

This opportunity cannot be understated, with 73% of players who take part in the tournament changing their lives for the better by coming off drugs and alcohol, moving into jobs, education, homes, training, reuniting with families and even going on to become players and coaches for pro or semi-pro football teams.

The obvious question to ask is, 'What does football have to do with homelessness?' Surely the glamour and glory of the beautiful game presents a stark contrast to the harsh realities of street life?

For Mel (who had previously founded the Big Issue Scotland Magazine) and his friend Harald Schmied, who ran a street paper in Graz, Switzerland, football was the unifier that could bring homeless people of all nations together to highlight their problems and the catalyst to improve their situation.

The pair had many discussions about how to unite homeless people in a global forum to draw attention to their cause. However, no matter what their ideas – from conferences to exchanges, there seemed to be too many obstacles.

Each idea had insurmountable barriers; would homeless people want to take part in it? Would it raise public interest? Could the homeless people get visas? How could so many nationalities talk to each other? But then, a eureka moment, "It occurred to us that there is an international language and it is called football," explains Mel. "The idea worked on so many levels. Football is a simple game that anyone can play. Old, young, male female; you can play it anywhere. Homeless people are isolated and football makes them feel part of something."



Mel Young

Making a change

The first tournament took place in Graz, Austria, in 2003, featuring 144 homeless players from 18 different nations. Since then, the Homeless World Cup

has become a yearly event that has helped hundreds of thousands of homeless people from across the globe to achieve a better future.

Mel explains, "All around the world hostels or homelessness charities have set up their own football teams. Staff from these projects are able to use the game as an opportunity to build a relationship with the homeless person, to discuss

their needs and make them aware of any help that may be available to them."

From the simple act of being asked to join a kick-about, the homeless person is presented with a social circle of new friends, is given support to improve their situation, experiences the health benefits of regular exercise and is incentivised with the possibility of success at football.

"As the players progress within these teams, they start to address some of the issues in front of them such as finding work or getting off drugs."

For the lucky players who make the Homelessness World Cup tournament, their journey will have taken a year, but "by the time they get to the final, they could have a

The world at



Stars Back Homelessness World Cup



Rio Ferdinand, Captain of Manchester United and England, said: "The Homeless World Cup is inspirational in using the power of football to unite people living on the edge of society, to give them a fresh opportunity to prove to themselves, to prove to the world, that they are no different than anyone else. On this global stage they create real sporting entertainment, set the magic of football alive, change their lives and change the perception of thousands around the world. They return as heroes, ambassadors for their country, leaders in their local community and the change continues on."

Eric Cantona, ex-France National and Global Ambassador for the Homelessness World Cup said, "Everybody needs to wake up in the morning with a goal. The Homeless World Cup brings this opportunity – to go into training, to change your life."

job, be in education, have accommodation, be off drugs, and back within society," says Mel.

But is it really so simple, can football really help to bring change for what is clearly a complex social problem? Mel argues that it is precisely this simplicity that makes the Homelessness World Cup so successful.

"I sometimes think that in the realm of social welfare, we make things too complicated. There are huge issues with homelessness in the world and some of the problems behind them are really complex, but we need simple solutions so people can grab them."

"Many homeless people have a lack of confidence and self-esteem and it becomes a self fulfilling prophecy. We give homeless people an opportunity and open doors for them. I have seen homeless people with difficult problems, for instance heavy drug use, really change their lives because they are so motivated to take part and make the team."

Mel explains, "You can't play football well if you are taking substances so there is an incentive on you to come off drugs."

The tournaments

The Homelessness World Cup tournament comprises of 6 cup competitions for players of all abilities, including a women's football tournament, with the

'Homelessness World Cup' itself for the most skilled players.

Based in the heart of major cities, the tournaments attract huge support from locals, with tens of thousands of people watching games.

"We have changed the stereotypical media view of a homeless person on the street, begging and looking menacing. What we are saying is this person could be a football star. They represent their country, sing their national anthems and sign autographs. Football supporters who go to our games will never look the same way at a homeless person again."

The games themselves provide just as much excitement and drama as the professional World Cup. "Last year Ukraine beat Portugal by one goal. The year before, Afghanistan beat Russia 5 - 4 and Russia had a chance to score in the last minute. When the final whistle went the atmosphere was incredible."

However, it's what happens off the field that Mel is most proud of. "I got on the bus a year ago and the bus driver said "Hey Mel". It was a player who had taken part in the previous year's tournament. "Now he has a job, a house, is engaged to be married. His life has completely changed and what motivated him was football." Simple really.



their feet

Footballers sign for

Middlesbrough FC stars Seb Hines and Rhys Williams took part in a training session of a different kind in February when they attended a British Sign Language class held for CIC's care staff in the North East.

CIC hosted a two days of training on British Sign Language, Makaton and Deaf Awareness thanks to a £4000 donation from the club, who also provided their Riverside stadium as our training venue. The sessions were attended by over 50 of our care staff who provide Independent Living and Senior Care support.

The training, which was provided by specialist disability trainers 'Hear First', was designed to equip CIC's care staff with basic British Sign Language and Makaton communications skills related to their day-to-day work and enhance their understanding of how to communicate effectively with individuals with hearing loss.

The footballers attended the British Sign Language event, where they

partnered CIC staff to learn how to sign and experience what it is like to rely on lip-reading.

Australian international defender Rhys Williams worked with Wais Zamani, home manager of Stone Street Flats in a sign language exercise. Rhys told *You First*, "I really enjoyed taking part in today's class. I was surprised by how hard it was for people to lip-read what I was saying. For us it was just a game, but some people have to use these skills in their everyday life, so it was eye-opening."

Defender Seb Hines added, "The sign language was a real challenge but good fun too. It's clear that people have put a lot of work into their training and it was good to see the club's donation going to good use."

CIC hosts Deaf



Our training organisation for the two day event, **Hear First** (www.hearfirst.org.uk), is led by individuals who experience deafness and disabilities themselves, giving them a unique understanding of the

issues they train on.

This insight equipped our care staff with lots of new skills and knowledge that will enhance their support of people with communications and hearing difficulties.

Course trainer Julie Ryder became deaf in her 20's. She says, "We really enjoyed working with the staff from CIC, they had a good attitude to learning. They gained a real awareness into what it is like living with deafness and this will help them improve the standard of care and service to deaf people."

The training sessions were great fun, particularly the British Sign Language Sessions. It was amazing how quickly everyone picked up the signs and how much they learnt in one day.

It gives us a lot of job satisfaction to know that the skills and knowledge these staff have gained will ultimately help with communication in daily life. We are thrilled that CIC value this investment into their staff."

Julie shares with us some key information on deaf awareness and British sign language.



or CIC



Awareness and British sign language training

Julie on Deafness...

- "Deafness affects approximately 9 million people in the UK, or 1 in 7 of the population. Not all deafness is the same.
- Over 8 million people are hard of hearing. This means a mild or moderate hearing loss and it is usually associated with old age.
- Approximately 50,000 deaf people in the UK use British Sign Language (BSL) as their first, or preferred language. These people are usually born deaf and they are proud to be part of the Deaf Community.
- There are approximately 123,000 deafened people in the UK. These are usually people who became profoundly deaf as adults or teenagers. There are many reasons for acquiring deafness such as meningitis and viral infections but in most cases the reason for deafness is unknown.
- There are approximately 24,000 deafblind people in the UK (16,000 of these are over 70 years of age.) This means they experience some sight and some hearing loss. The degree of loss will vary from person to person but combined visual and auditory impairment results in problems with communication, information and mobility."

Julie on British Sign Language...

- "British Sign Language is unique to Britain. Other countries have their own Sign Languages.
- BSL is a language in its own right, and has its own grammar structure, linguistics, history and culture.
- It is a visual gestural concept based language and can't be written down.
- Some signs have variations around the country, for example a sign used in Liverpool may be different when used in London – rather like accents and dialects in spoken English."

Julie's tips to support people with deafness....

- "Find out their preferred communication method.
- Reduce background noise or go somewhere quiet.
- Get the person's attention before you start to speak.
- Make sure the deaf person can see your face.
- Introduce the context of the conversation.
- Don't shout, speak clearly.
- Use appropriate gestures.
- Write down the key words."

RNID •))) For more information...

RNID are the largest charity working to change the world for the UK's 9 million deaf and hard of hearing people. Contact them for more information about deafness, equipment to help deaf people and tips for good communication.

Information Line (Freephone)

Telephone 0808 808 0123

Textphone 0808 808 9000

informationline@rnid.org.uk

www.rnid.org.uk



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Reviews

This edition's reviews are brought to us by the HR team...



Book Helen Pidd – Bicycle

At CIC, we have many cycling enthusiasts who leave their car at home and take to two wheels to get around, reduce road pollution and keep fit. HR Manager Paula Hilton is a perfect example.

Paula was instrumental in setting up a cycle to work scheme at CIC's Support Services. To promote pedal power, she interviews Helen Pidd, Guardian journalist and author of a fantastic new book 'Bicycle. Love Your Bike: The Complete Guide to Everyday Cycling'.

P: Cycling is very popular with our staff and service users, why do you think people enjoy it so much?

H: Where to begin? Freedom, independence, that exhilarating feeling of the wind in your hair as you whiz down a hill... Having a bike is a cheap, enjoyable way of getting from A to B while also giving your body a workout.

By not owning a car, or buying a season ticket for public transport - or forking out for a gym membership - you can save thousands of pounds every year. Cycling is also a great family activity, suitable for people of all ages, abilities and body shapes.

P: What are your top tips for someone who wants to take up cycling for the first time?

H: First of all, I would recommend having a good browse on the website of the CTC, the national cyclists' organization www.ctc.org.uk. Start off cycling on traffic free routes - to map quiet roads near you go to environmental charity, Sustrans website www.sustrans.org.uk. Many local authorities now offer free or subsidized cycling lessons. Things have changed a lot since the days of the cycling proficiency test when you had to wobble around cones in the primary school playground. These days, you will learn real life skills, such as coping in busy traffic and negotiating roundabouts, as well as how to signal properly and do emergency stops. To find your nearest instructor, see: www.ctc.org.uk/cycletraining/

P: Is cycling an expensive hobby, or for instance, are there inexpensive ways to buy or hire a bike?

H: No! It's as cheap or expensive as you want to be. Cycling can be absolutely free - statistics show that almost 50% of households have at least one bike gathering dust in their shed, so you might well not need to spend a penny. Most bikes can be brought back to life with a bit of effort, and many local authorities now run free bike maintenance workshops.

P: What is the best way to stay safe when cycling?

H: Be alert and confident. Always cycle towards the middle of roads rather than close to the kerb. You have just as much of a right to take up space on a road as a car. Make sure you communicate with other road users by signaling properly and continually looking around you. Wear a helmet and/or high-viz gear, but importantly, position yourself on the road where everyone can see you. You can be head-to-toe in luminous yellow but if you're cycling up the back end of a truck out of the driver's sight, you might as well be invisible.

P: 'Wheels For All' has seen lots of people with disabilities and mental health concerns take up cycling. What are the physical and mental benefits of cycling?

H: There are loads! Cycling is great cardiovascular exercise, so it will keep your heart healthy and burn calories. It will also tone up legs, thighs and bums. And because it is non weight-bearing, it is kind to knees and other joints. On the mental front, cycling is a great way to regain confidence and independence because it allows you to get somewhere off your own steam without anyone else's help. It's also a great stress buster, going for a spin in the countryside is the perfect way to calm down.

Competition

We have two copies of Helen's new book, 'Bicycle. Love Your Bike: The Complete Guide to Everyday Cycling' to give away - just answer the following simple question:

Which of the following is a type of bicycle?

- A) Penny Farthing
- B) The 50p
- C) The ten pound note.



Music Katie Melua – The House

Reviewed by Sara Johnson, HR Manager, Central Support Services

I wouldn't describe myself as a big Katie Melua fan, I have her 'Call Off The Search' album (a gift) and I like it (it's great to relax to), so was happy to review her new album which was produced with William Orbit.

"The House" is an interesting mix of some really 'distinctive Katie' sounds, her typical rich, smooth and easy on the ear style, with great production from William Orbin. It's real surprise!

The album takes you on a journey and is full of interesting lyrics, especially on opening track 'I'd Love To Kill You' and her song about a world of 'Tiny Aliens'. All in all I am really enjoying this album, it's a keeper and for me is timeless listen.

Email your answers to our john.hughes@c-i-c.co.uk or send your answers to our address on page 3. Deadline for entries is August 1st 2010.

Competition

You First has two copies of Katie's new CD to give away. Just tell us, according to Katie, how many bicycles are there in Beijing?

- A) Ten
- B) Nine million
- C) She does not believe there are any bicycles in Beijing.

Doddy Did It!

Tenants at CIC's newest service, Marston Gardens, were tickled pink when Liverpool comedy legend, Ken Dodd OBE, joined them at the official opening of their new home.

Bringing his infamous brand of hilarity to the celebrations (not to mention hundreds of tickling sticks!), the excited crowd were soon whipped into a frenzy of laughter by Doddy who, with help from resident Lynn Doyle, cut the ribbon to the new scheme.

Once inside, Doddy unveiled a commemorative plaque, recognising the hard work and commitment which has gone into developing the brand new, state of the art, £2.8m scheme.

Built by Cosmopolitan Housing, in conjunction with Knowsley Council, the project, which includes 23 purpose built 'extra care' apartments, offers both independence and day-to-day support for people with a diverse range of needs, including learning difficulties, physical disabilities, mental health issues and older people in need of support.

As well as a range of flexible personalised support packages and a 24 hour staff base, residents are able to enjoy their own self-contained one or two bed apartment which includes a fully fitted kitchen, lounge and wet room with walk in shower. The complex also offers a communal lounge and kitchen, laundry room, assisted bathroom, IT suite, treatment and therapy rooms and gardens.

Innovation is also a key feature, with a wide range of assistive technologies on hand to maximise tenants' independence and quality of life.

"It's amazing how, in such a short space of time, we have created our own little community here at Marston Gardens," says Service Manager, Michelle Duval. "This scheme isn't about just giving people somewhere to live; it's about giving them a home too, helping them lead fuller lives within their community. So whilst people may just want to spend time in their own flat, they have the choice of coming down to the lounge to socialise and relax with their neighbours."

"Partnership working has played an important role in making this service so successful and I can't speak highly enough of the other organisations we have worked with, such as Cosmopolitan Housing and Knowsley Council, to get this project off the ground.

We believe that these fantastic facilities and our excellent care and support will make Marston Gardens a happy, homely and secure place to live for all of our tenants."





CIC win big at the Great British Home Care Awards

Scooping the top prize in two of the most prestigious categories, CIC was named as overall winner of the **Care Employer of the Year** category, with Service Manager, Caroline Bairstow, receiving the national **Care Innovator of the Year** award.

Winners were announced at a Gala ceremony held in London's Guildhall on Saturday 15th May, with trophies presented by entertainer Keith Chegwin.

The event was the culmination of a series of regional care awards, celebrating success across the care sector. Aimed at promoting best practice, the awards paid tribute to individuals and companies who had demonstrated excellence within their field.

Operations Director, Jane Worsley, and Assistant Director for the North East, Denise Blewitt, who represented CIC at the interview stages for the Care Employer award, were praised as "two sparkling ambassadors" for CIC. Beating an impressive array of care providers to the title of Care Employer of the Year, judges praised CIC saying, "CIC clearly demonstrated their commitment to developing staff and

actively seeking best practice. We were impressed with the 'can do' attitude that runs throughout their staff and their clear success at developing services moulded around an individual's needs."

Judges also paid tribute to Care Innovator, Caroline Bairstow, for championing CIC's social inclusion group – Step up to Life, saying, "Caroline demonstrated clear passion and determination with a new initiative based around inclusion of service users...linking to senior management company wide." They went to commend the Step up to Life project as "an initiative...truly innovative in the field of social inclusion and involving service users."

CIC CEO, Phil Edgington said, "We are both honoured and delighted to be named as Care Employer of the Year at these prestigious awards.

We understand that we could not achieve even a fraction of our good work without the dedication, enthusiasm and loyalty of our staff. Given how much they give to us, we are committed to making sure we give something back to them too.

"We are thrilled that Caroline Bairstow has been recognised for her pioneering attitude in the field of social inclusion. CIC was founded on the principles of inclusion and integration for all, so it is fantastic to see our staff being recognised for their commitment to these values."

He concluded by saying, "Acknowledgment and thanks must also be given to the many individuals and teams who were recognised at the regional heats of the awards. I have no doubt that the number and quality of entries for such these awards was high, and their success is a testament to their hard work and commitment to the people we support."



This year our Addictions and Homelessness services are opening their doors to the public, giving their local communities a flavour of the valuable work they do and the support they offer.

Open House

Cath Groves, Director for Addictions and Homelessness Services says, "Our services are based in the heart of the community and are a vital source of support to lots of local people. Unfortunately, there is a lack of understanding about the work that goes on in addictions and homelessness services and by opening our doors, we can break down people's misconceptions and the barriers that stop people seeking the help they need."

We have already held a number of great events, including open days at our St Helens Community Link and Crewe addictions services and our Orchard House and Belvedere homelessness services.

These events have seen staff and service users welcome hundreds of people from their local community into their services, showcasing their many talents and talk with pride about their steps to a brighter future. Take a look at some of the action...

Belvedere

Local MP Derek Twigg and Halton Councillors, Marie Wright and Sheila Walsh joined in the celebrations at Runcorn homelessness service, Belvedere, as the service launched its healthy living programme as part of its Foyer Accreditation programme.

The launch event was attended by over 100 members of the local community who joined in a number of fun and interactive activities including yoga classes, healthy eating tutorials and cookery classes, hosted by Belvedere staff and residents and the service's partner agencies including Young Addaction and local NHS agencies.

Project administrator Lisa Grice explained, "Our event has been a fantastic success and has really given the local community a great opportunity to experience some of the great work that goes on at Belvedere. This year we will be hosting lots of activities and tutorials that will inspire and educate our residents with new ways to keep healthy."

Derek Twigg MP said: "I have a long association with Belvedere, so it has been great to come back and meet its staff and residents. Belvedere plays an important role in supporting people who face real difficulties. The issue of health and wellbeing is important for homeless individuals, so it is great to see that Belvedere on track to achieve Foyer Accreditation."



Community Link

Community Link's open day was a real musical celebration as service users performed music that they had written about their experiences of substance misuse. Their performance was so impressive that local Mayor, Terry Shields, took to the stage to give his own rendition of 'That's Life', a song that he felt also summed up the highs and lows of life. Service Manager Karen Anderson says, "Our open day was attended by all of our partners, which shows the great relationship our service has with its community. The people who access our service should be proud of the steps that they have taken to overcome their substance misuse and we are delighted that our many stakeholders could join us in celebrating their success."

Orchard House

Widnes based homelessness service Orchard House entertained members of their community with all manner of fun activities. The service had everything from a musical performance by residents Daniel McWilliam and Christian Lebbitt to a visit from a mobile zoo. For those who prefer things to be a little more relaxed, the service also offered trials of our Biophysical Solutions relaxation treatment and pamper sessions delivered by resident Chantelle Manning and staff member Karen Lafferty. Katie Burke, Senior Support Worker said, "We had a fantastic day. There were so many great things going on that all of our guests were thoroughly entertained. We were delighted to welcome to our home many of our community partners and especially delighted to see some of our former residents who have moved on to independence in their own homes."





An Unexpected Union

Our CEO, Phil Edgington takes a look at the recent general election that has changed the way Britain is governed and asks "What does a Tory-Liberal Coalition mean for social and health care?"

On May 25th, the new Conservative, Liberal Democratic, coalition government presented a united front as the Queen delivered her first speech on behalf of the new government. It contains 24 bills and one draft bill.

These bills are developed from the Coalition's Programme for Government which was published on May 20th and is available on the HM Government Website.

However, I think it is important for CIC that we take the time here to look at a few key areas that will have a big impact upon our sector, namely, Social Care and Disability, Public Health, Older People and Pensions and the NHS.



The Coalition: Our Programme for government

The foreword of this publication is written by David Cameron and Nick Clegg. They claim that this "partnership government" shares a conviction that the "days of big government are over; that centralisation and top-down control have proved a failure." They say that to build a free, fair and responsible society, they want to "distribute power and opportunity to people rather than hoarding authority within government."

The Prime Minister and his Deputy admit that "difficult decisions will have to be taken in the months and years ahead", but that all those most in need will be protected.

SOCIAL CARE AND DISABILITY

The government wants to reform the system of social care to provide much more control to individuals and their carers, and to ease the cost burden that they and their families face. Proposed actions:

- Establish a commission on long-term care, to report within a year. The commission will consider a voluntary insurance scheme to protect the assets of those who go into residential care, and a partnership scheme as proposed by Sir Derek Wanless.
- Breaking down barriers between health and social care funding to incentivise preventative action
- Extending personal budgets
- Direct payments to carers and better community-based provision to improve access to respite care
- Reform Access to Work, so disabled people can secure adaptations and equipment they will need to enter employment.

PUBLIC HEALTH

The Government believes action is needed to promote public health, and encourage behaviour change to help people live healthier lives. Some actions to be taken are:

- Give local communities greater control over public health budgets with payment by the outcomes they achieve in improving the health of local residents.
- Give GPs incentives to tackle public health problems
- Look at improving access to preventative healthcare for those in disadvantaged areas to help tackle health inequalities.
- Greater access to talking therapies to reduce long-term costs for the NHS.

PENSIONS AND OLDER PEOPLE

The Government believes older people deserve dignity and respect in old age, and that they should be provided with the support they need. That means safeguarding key benefits and pensions, and taking action to make it easier for them to work or volunteer. The plans:

- Guarantee that state pensions will rise by at least 2.5% in line with rises earnings or inflation.
- Establish an independent commission to review the long-term affordability of public sector pensions, while protecting accrued rights.
- Phasing out the default retirement age and hold a review to set the date at which the state pension age starts to rise to 66, (but not before 2016 for men and 2020 for women).
- Explore providing greater flexibility in accessing some personal pension fund early.
- Encourage companies to offer high-quality pensions to all employees and support auto-enrolment.

"This new partnership government spells major changes in how social and health care services will be delivered".

NHS

The Government are committed to an NHS that is free at the point of use and available to everyone based on need, not the ability to pay. They aim to drive up standards, support professional responsibility, deliver better value for money and create a healthier nation. The plans:

- Guarantee an increase in health spending in real terms in each year.
- Reduce duplication and the resources spent on administration, and diverting these resources back to front-line care.
- Cut the number of health quangos.
- Stop the closure of A&E wards
- Enable GPs to commission care on patients behalf
- Include members of the public onto the boards of their local Primary Care Trust (PCT).
- The local PCT will take responsibility for improving public health for people in their area, working closely with the local authority and other local organisations.
- If a local authority has concerns about a significant proposed closure of local services, for example an A&E department, it will have the right to challenge health organizations.
- Every patient can choose to register

with the GP they want, without being restricted by where they live.

- Develop a 24/7 urgent care service in every area of England
- Help elderly people live at home for longer through solutions such as home adaptations and community support programmes.
- Prioritise dementia research.
- Strengthen the role of the Care Quality Commission.
- Establish an independent NHS board to allocate resources and provide commissioning guidelines.
- Enable patients to rate hospitals and doctors according to the quality of care they received.
- Publish detailed data about the performance of healthcare providers online.
- Put patients in charge of making decisions about their care, including control of their health records.
- Create a Cancer Drugs Fund
- Reform the National Institute for Clinical Excellence
- increase access to NHS dentistry
- Introduce a new per-patient funding system for all hospices and providers of palliative care.
- Give greater involvement to independent and voluntary providers.
- Give every patient the power to choose any healthcare provider that meets NHS standards, within NHS prices. This includes independent, voluntary and community sector providers.

Health Secretary Andrew Lansley said:

"This document sets out a clear message to the NHS that our united vision is for a healthcare system which achieves outcomes that are amongst the best in the world, and free from day-to-day political interference.

"The proposals will drive up standards of care, eliminate waste and lead to better outcomes that improve the health of the nation."

Care Services Minister Paul Burstow says:

"Urgent reform of the social care system is at the top of our agenda. The current system is unsustainable – it cannot go on as it is. Our first step to reform is to establish an independent commission.

"The Commission on Long Term Care will be tasked with delivering a sustainable

settlement, which is a fair partnership between the state and the individual. We'll set out further details and the terms of reference soon."

The Government has also announced that it will not be commencing the provisions in the Personal Care at Home Act, 2010 relating to free care at home. However, they will be considering what more can be done on re-ablement and carers' breaks in the light of available resources."

The English Community Care Association (ECCA), the leading representative body for independent care providers, of which CIC are an active member, has endorsed the Coalition Government's programme for health and social care. ECCA CEO, Martin Green, says: "The Coalition Government has brought together some of the positive elements of both parties' manifestos and sets a clear direction for delivering quality health and social care. The social care sector is ready to work cooperatively, creatively and dynamically across the whole system to innovate and deliver high quality care for service users and efficiency and outcomes for the system."

Interestingly, in supplementary information to the Queens Speech on the subject of public services, it is being suggested that third sector organisations will be able to bid to run public services. The government also pledged to give public sector workers the right to form employee-owned cooperatives and bid to run the services they deliver.

As CEO of CIC, I believe that this new partnership government spells major changes in how social and health care services will be delivered. There are some positive commitments being made to improving the wellbeing and lifestyles of the people we support and there seems to be a real attempt to develop independence and choice. However, at the time of going to print, the emergency budget to reduce public borrowing (the worst on record) was still to be revealed (June 22). With £6 billion in spending cuts already outlined, tackling the government deficit is still the most pressing concern for this nation.

Whatever the challenges we face, I am confident that CIC will continue to strive for innovation and improvement and will inspire all who work with us, with our commitment to ensuring the best, most efficient and satisfying outcomes for every individual we support.

Calling all staff!

My CIC

Your Charity • Your Ideas • Your Benefits

Look out for your copy of '**My CIC**', your mini guide to the 2010/11 Business Plan and your employee benefits.