

April 09

**ABERDEENSHIRE
DISABILITY
ACTION Ltd**
Supporting the individual



ISSUE 17

Editorial

Welcome to the April edition of the ADA newsletter. Spring is now upon us and it's definitely getting a bit warmer. With that in mind, our thoughts generally turn to summer & the possibility of summer holidays. We have included a section on suggestions for accessible holidays both home & abroad, with further details also available here at Unit 4 within the Disability Information Service.

We are also pleased to include information on the launch of our new On-line Forum & Chat Rooms and the further availability of counselling sessions. Also news of the EHRC workshops we have been involved with at Mintlaw Academy.

Yvonne was very pleased to accept a donation of £200 from the Acorn Centre at a presentation at the end of March. She enjoyed a very pleasant evening whilst accepting the cheque, with hospitality laid on at the Centre. It celebrated the first anniversary of the opening of the Centre and its success. The money is to be used to purchase a pop-up banner for ADA and other promotional material and we are very grateful for the donation.

With all this great information included inside as well as with the other services we offer, I am sure you will agree that the £5 ADA membership fee is great value for money and that you will be happy to fill in the enclosed ADA membership form for 2009-2010!

Many thanks.

Board Report April 2009

This is the time of year when we wait with trepidation for the Council to decide our funding for the coming year. We have our plans for how to move forward but these, as can be imagined, are heavily dependent on us having the money to meet our budgeted expenditure for the year ahead. We will, of course, further review activity when the funding decision is to hand and we are hoping that this will be a short process, with few changes to our plans needed.

In respect of one key potential development for the future we can advise we are seeking funding from the Big Lottery Fund to enable us to undertake research into how the personalisation agenda could best be "modelled" for physically disabled people in Aberdeenshire. This is an important piece of necessary work and being involved as a lead body gives us the opportunity to ensure that the process is led by the aspirations and needs of individuals, which we see as vital if the new approach to service provision is to work properly for physically disabled people. If we are successful the work itself would start in 2010.

We will also be putting effort into ensuring that the education service continues. Currently, funding ends in June and we know that this a popular and effective service that is generally well received in schools, so we are extremely keen to ensure it continues and, if possible, develops to cover other age groups and organisations. However, we anticipate that funding for such development would have to be sought from grant funders.

We will keep you appraised of developments, in what is shaping up to be a very interesting and challenging year for ADA.

On Line Forum

Aberdeenshire Disability Action has been hard at work developing a new forum for everyone to use on their website at www.aberdeenshiredisabilityaction.org.

The new forum, officially named Aberdeenshire Disability Forum, is being launched to enable and empower disabled people across the shire to have a platform to air their views, concerns and issues.

The forum has been designed to allow any user to post comments, views, concerns and questions in an environment that permits others to post replies, or answers. Various threads can be created, according to topics of interest. There is no limit to the number of topics, nor to the number of replies. All that is necessary is online registration as a new user, then start posting!

The launch coincides with the establishment of a Disability Forum that works by having grassroots meetings throughout the shire on various topics of interest or concern to disabled people.

However, as with all services provided by Aberdeenshire Disability Action, these forums are open to everyone, including professionals, key workers and the general public.

Aberdeenshire Disability Action wish to create, encourage and foster the interest of the general public by providing links between the organisation and those it serves and the wider community. One way in which it is intended to do this is through the new online Aberdeenshire Disability Forum.



Eat your way to a healthier heart

Regular exercise and a healthy diet can help lower cholesterol levels. But what should your diet include?

First, cut out refined carbohydrates such as white flour and sugar, to keep blood sugar levels healthy. High levels cause damage to arteries, dramatically raising heart disease risk. Eat fresh fruit (for vitamin C), vegetables, whole grains and omega 3 oils (from seeds and oily fish) to lower the inflammation of arteries—a key risk factor in heart disease.

Increase your intake of plant sterols, from seeds and nuts (walnuts keep arteries elastic) and beans, as well as soluble fibre found in oats, barley and aubergines. Both help lower cholesterol.

Make sure you are getting enough vitamin D. Some experts suggest a daily intake of at least 25 micrograms to protect against heart disease and cancer. Get vitamin D from sunshine (10–15 minutes towards midday), foods such as oily fish—mackerel, salmon, tuna or tinned sardines—or supplements.

Cook with the spice turmeric. It contains curcumin, which reduces the stickiness of platelets in the blood and relaxes arteries.

If you have raised cholesterol, ask your GP about taking the supplement niacin. This B vitamin is effective in raising good HDL (high density lipoprotein) and lowering total cholesterol.

Check your levels of amino acid called homocysteine, a risk factor for heart disease. (You can buy a homocysteine home blood test kit over the counter or online). Reduce homocysteine by increasing B vitamins with a diet of pulses—such as lentils—and high-folate green leafy vegetables like spinach and leeks.

Banish Those Washday Blues

Banish those washday blues by going green. It could save you £70 a year.

Why waste money on electricity bills at a time when they're at their highest ever? If you make just a few simple changes to your washday habits—changes so small you'll hardly notice them—your household could save £63 a year and 280kg of CO². That's over 120kg per person in an average family. And with a new A-rated energy efficient washing machine, those savings will increase to £70 on a year's bills and 139kg per person.

Waiting until you have a full load will knock 45kg off an average carbon footprint and £10 off a typical power bill, while setting the washer at 30 degrees C, rather than 60, will save 55kg a year and more than £12.

According to a YouGov poll, 41 per cent of households are still not washing a full load at this cooler setting and half still use the tumble dryer. The dryer is the most energy-hungry appliance in the home. Why not try hanging the clothes outside on a line as we all used to. When it's time to get a new washing machine, choose one with a high spin cycle (1200-1400rpm) which will wring out most of the water out of your clothes so that they dry quicker. That, on top of the greater energy-efficiency of new A-rated washers will help you clean up the planet as well as your clothes.

More Washday Wisdom

Cut out the unnecessary pre-wash programme.

Think before you chuck something into the laundry basket—it may not need washing. For a gentle steam clean, leave an article of clothing on a hanger in the bathroom while you shower or bathe.

If you have to use a tumble dryer, run loads back to back while the drum is still hot and keep the filter lint-free.

Do all your ironing for the week in one go rather than reheating the iron every day.

Holidays

Here are a few ideas for holidays both at home and abroad, further information available at ADA. Come up to ADA to look through our Information Service's brochures and leaflets on accessible holidays.

Scotland

Woodhead Cottages— 2 self catering accessible cottages set in the heart of Speyside at Dulnain Bridge, Contact Woodhead Cottages, Birch Cottage, Skye of Curr Road, Dulnain Bridge PH26 3PA. Tel. 01479 851298 www.woodhead-cottage.co.uk

Fhuarain Forest Cottages—2 self catering cottages designed to accommodate assisted wheelchair users in Badanfhuarain, Nethy Bridge, Inverness-shire PH25 3ED. Tel. 07522 792486. www.forestcottages.com

Crathie Opportunity Holidays—4 self catering cottages with facilities for disabled people on Royal Deeside. Crathie Opportunity Holidays, The Manse Courtyard, Crathie, Ballater AB35 5UL. Tel. 013397 42100 www.crathieholidays.org.uk

Ashton Hotel, Dumfries— set in the 100 acre Crichton estate, this hotel has one ground floor accessible room with an en-suite wet room & two further accessible rooms.

Tel. 01387 272410. www.astonhotels.co.uk/astonhoteldumfries/

Eildon Holiday Cottages, situated above Melrose in the borders, is a converted eighteenth century farm steading forming 6 self catering cottages. Access to the cottages and manoeuvrability within them is good for disabled people.

Eildon Holiday Cottages, Dingleton Mains, Melrose, Roxburghshire TD6 9HS
Tel. 0189 6823258 www.eildon.co.uk

Lovat Lodge Hotel, Nairn is designed to cater for people who need a comfortable and accessible place to stay and has wheelchair accessible suites with bathrooms. Tel. 01667 453298 www.lovatlodgehotel.co.uk

Lovat Lodge Hotel, Thurlow Road, Nairn IV12 4EZ

Holidays

Europe

Casa de Suenã - one of Spain's finest luxury wheelchair accessible holiday villas, suitable for disabled people and their families. Private 10m x 5m pool with pool hoist. Near Javea on the Costa Blanca, Spain. Wheelchair access to all areas.

<http://www.accessvillaspain.com/> Tel. 01900 67280

Email: info@accessvillaspain.com

Evas Tourist apartments in Cyprus - a wheelchair friendly complex with pool hoist, roll in showers in both studios and apartment as well as by the pool area, owned by a wheelchair user.

<http://www.evas-apartments.com/> Tel. ++357 26321881

Email: chris@evas-apartments.com

Montana Sol, a wheelchair accessible holiday complex near Torremolinos on the Costa del Sol in Spain. Accessible transport available from Malaga Airport to the complex.

<http://www.montanasol.com> Tel. 0034 952 382 442

Email: info@montanasol.com

Brittany, France. 6 purpose built apartments, designed for maximum accessibility in a former cotton mill on the banks of the River Jaudy.

<http://www.ineedaholidaytoo.com/> Freephone: 0800 94906801

Email: info@ineedaholidaytoo.com

Or try something different..... Matching Houses—the disability holiday exchange site created by disabled people for disabled people. International house exchange based on accessibility. You join and describe your house including its accessibility in some detail. When you log on to look for matching houses to swap with, only houses likely to be accessible to you are shown.

<http://www.matchinghouses.com/> Tel. 01736 361871

Salt is a 'natural mood booster'

Scientists suggest we may add extra salt to our food because it boosts our mood, even though we know too much is bad for us.

University of Iowa researchers writing in *Psychology and Behaviour* say salt may act as a natural antidepressant. . But experts warn eating too much salt is linked to high blood pressure. The body needs sodium - which along with chloride makes up salt - to function, but having too much and raising blood pressure is linked to an increased risk of stroke and heart attack.

The UK's Food Standards Agency says the average adult should eat no more than 6g of salt a day. Intake is falling, but last year the average was 8.6g. Around three-quarters of the salt we eat comes in pre-prepared foods. The findings are published as the FSA renewed its advice for people to eat more healthily. It backed an independent panel of experts warning that celebrity chefs were promoting high-fat recipes, and contributing to the obesity crisis.

The tests carried out by US researchers found that when rats were deficient in salt, they shy away from activities they normally enjoy, like drinking a sugary substance or pressing a bar that stimulates a pleasant sensation in their brains. Psychologist Kim Johnson, who led the research, said: "Things that normally would be pleasurable for rats didn't elicit the same degree of relish, which leads us to believe that a salt deficit and the craving associated with it can induce one of the key symptoms associated with depression." " This research may help us to understand why some people still eat too much salt, even though they know it's bad for them "

She said a loss of pleasure in normally pleasing activities is one of the most important features of psychological depression. And she said there were signs salt could be addictive. One sign of addiction is using a substance even when it is known to be harmful - and even though people know they should cut their salt intake, they like the taste and find low-salt foods bland so continue to eat it.

Salt is a 'natural mood booster' contd.

Another strong aspect of addiction is the development of cravings if something is withheld. The University of Iowa team say tests they carried out showed similar changes in brain activity whether rats are exposed to drugs or salt deficiency. "This suggests that salt need and cravings may be linked to the same brain pathways as those related to drug addiction and abuse."

But a spokesman for Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH), which campaigns to raise awareness about the health risks of eating too much salt, said: "Our bodies need a very small amount of salt to function, but nothing like the quantities that most of us eat. "This research may help us to understand why some people still eat too much salt, even though they know it's bad for them. "I personally have never felt depressed by not eating too much salt: I think it would be far more depressing to have a heart attack or stroke that could have been avoided by not eating so much salt."

Story from BBC NEWS:

Get Something for Nothing!

If you like freebies and who doesn't, the Internet can be a short cut to finding giveaways. Register with website freebieholics.co.uk, for example, and you'll have access to information about free offers, samples, services and tickets to live entertainment.

In the same way, madaboutbargains.co.uk hunts down discounts on everything from half-price insurance to savings on theme parks. For a detailed rundown of current food and drink promotions at the main supermarkets, go to fixtureferrets.co.uk.

With all sites, it pays to act fast, as some of the offers may only be available for a limited time.

New Legislation

Two key pieces of legislation which the Equality and Human Rights Commission in Scotland have been actively involved in, have been passed by MSPs.

The Disabled Persons' Parking Places Bill has been approved, making it easier for Councils in Scotland to designate parking bays for use by disabled people. The new law will also see local authorities work with owners and operators of private car parks—such as supermarkets—to reach agreement on making parking spaces enforceable.

The Hate Crime Bill . The Scottish Parliament Justice Committee has also backed a new law to protect disabled people and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people from hate crime. The Bill will ensure that crimes motivated by hatred of disabled people or LGBT people will be considered as aggravated offences which will mean tougher sentences.

Did You Know?

If you have a clear out of your wardrobe and take your unwanted clothes to Oxfam, if one of the items included is a Marks and Spencers item, they will give you a £5 Marks and Spencer voucher per visit, valid for one calendar month to use next time you spend £35 or more on Clothing or Home and Beauty at M&S.

Not only will you save £5 next time you shop, you'll be helping reduce the amount of clothing going to landfill. And you'll also be helping Oxfam continue their vital work with people throughout the world.

Counselling Sessions

ADA is able to offer counselling sessions again via our Listening Ear Service with a trained counsellor and have three 1 hour sessions available on Fridays between 10.00am—1.00pm. The counsellor is particularly interested in working with parents of disabled children but anyone with a disability is very welcome.

If anyone is interested in this free service, please contact us here so that an appointment can be booked for you. This is a great opportunity to receive some counselling and be assured that privacy is maintained at all times.

European Human Rights Commission Project

Aberdeenshire Disability Action has recently been involved with an exciting project funded by the European Human Rights Commission (E.H.R.C.). The pilot project, named "Respect for All" aimed to improve understanding of the 6 strands of diversity; disability, age, faith, race, gender and sexuality.

A series of workshops took place over the course of 7 weeks at Mintlaw Academy, exploring things with the pupils that are important to people who may be different from themselves. The workshops enabled the young people to gain a better understanding of others in an exciting and fun way.

Aberdeenshire Disability Action was involved with the work done on the disability strand. We were also fortunate to have the international Rap and Hip Hop artist Millennium Child teach some of the pupils how to Rap and dance Hip Hop. This enabled them to put on a 'Celebration of Diversity' show for their families, including 'Raps' they had written themselves incorporating everything they had learned in the preceding weeks. They also performed Hip Hop sequences, which explored diversity issues through dance.

Everyone involved has declared this pilot to be a real success. Pupils certainly gained increased awareness of disability issues, and had them discussing and thinking about things that were new to them.

As mentioned, this project was a pilot one, but it is hoped that funding allowing, we can roll it out to other schools in Aberdeenshire.

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Please note that ADA does not necessarily endorse or subscribe to any of the items included or opinions expressed in the newsletter.

This publication available in alternative format on request.

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

UP TO 31 MARCH 2010

May we invite you to take up membership of Aberdeenshire Disability Action Limited. Each member is entitled to receive a copy of our annual report and bi-monthly newsletter. Notification concerning forthcoming events will be circulated. Information and matters of interest or concern in the field of disability are also circulated to members.

MEMBERSHIP COSTS: ORGANISATION - £10 INDIVIDUAL - £5

Name of individual or organisation	
Do you have a physical and/or sensory disability?	
Address	
Post Code	
Telephone number	Day Evening
E-mail details	
Would you rather receive your copy of the Newsletter by email?	Yes/No

Do you require the newsletter with larger print than point 14 ? Yes/No

If you are joining as an organisation, could you please complete the details below

Details of your organisation	
Approximate membership	
How often do you meet?	

The mailing list for our membership is kept on computer and on file to allow us ease in sending information to our members. In signing your membership form, you will indicate to us that you are aware that we are holding your details and that you do not object to this.

I/We enclose a cheque/postal order for £ being the current year's subscription.

Signed..... Date.....