

Swanfield Monthly

July 2010
Charity Number : SC 014991

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Annual Coffee morning

Saturday 21st August 10.00am—12.30pm

Entry £2.00 (includes coffee, tea or juice and cake/shortbread).

Tombola, Home baking, Grand Prize Draw, Bric-a-brac.

Place orders for Christmas cards

Find out about becoming an HBO Operator or volunteer

Keep selling those raffle tickets and return all counterfoils and monies to us by 15th August.

A few more raffle tickets are available in the Centre—can you sell more?

If you are a whizz in the kitchen and can donate home baking or jam for sale, please do!

Bottles and jars are coming in for the Tombola, and more are always welcome.



Recruitment column: Chairmanship

It will be with great regret that we will bid goodbye to Chairman Bruce Laidlaw at the AGM next April. Bruce stepped in to fill the role in January and is providing exceptional leadership and enthusiasm. However, he has indicated that he will be standing down and so the Centre will require a new chairman.

Ideally this person will be able to shadow him for a few months and then hit the ground running, as they say, in April, so we are recruiting now.

If you are interested in the future of the centre and would like to find out more about what the role involves before making a decision, please ask Alice. Perhaps you know someone who has good experience and might be interested to use it to support a local charity in this way? Put them in touch!

HBO Treatment for injuries

What do the Italian Grand Prix motorbike racer Valentino Rossi and Honda star James Ellison have in common? Both have recently broken their right legs and have returned to racing WEEKS earlier than expected after receiving Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy. Many other bikers are following them into the chamber at the Hyperbaric Centre on the Isle of Man. That shouldn't be a surprise to old hands at the Centre, and members Alan Robertson and Steve Garbett are both receiving HBO to aid recovery after serious injuries.

Why does it work? When tissue is damaged, the blood supply to that area is reduced and therefore so is the amount of oxygen that is received. Studies of the effect of HBOT on soft tissue injuries show that without sufficient oxygen, the strength of the tissue repair is weaker than before. The pressure in the chamber enables oxygen to be dissolved in the plasma as well as in the red blood cells, increasing the dose available by up to 3 times. A comparison was done for minor football injuries by our former Advisor Professor James: this showed that using HBO in conjunction with the usual physiotherapy reduced the expected number of days off by 70%.

Editor's column

It's been a busy month, and for those who wonder what the staff and committee get up to here's a wee taster!

We are inching closer to signing a Service Level Agreement with NHS Lothian, under which we receive £31,000 per year towards our costs, and are just waiting for a few points to be finalised. As a result of this agreement, *all* our policies must be updated (and in some cases written!). We are incredibly lucky that Cathy joined us just in time to help with the process as she has extensive experience in this area. Amongst others, the committee have approved the Health and Safety policy, the Confidentiality policy, the Complaints Policy (are you still awake?) and a Code of Conduct. All these are available in the Centre. The Volunteering policy will be discussed in September, and we are investigating the assistance that can be gained from the Volunteer Centre to enable us to support our volunteers in many ways.

But it's not all fun and games! Changes in the law mean that the Constitution of the Centre requires some updating. We are very fortunate to have support from law firm Turcan Connell in carrying this out, and you will hear more in due course. We will be recruiting for another full-time physiotherapist as capacity is seriously limited, as you are all aware, and are seeking funding for the role. The Centre will need another Chairman from April, and so the committee are keen to find someone as soon as possible to shadow Bruce as he goes about that crucial role (see left).

In the meantime, meetings have been held with the local Area Development Officer of MS Society Scotland, to find ways to work more closely together on the ground, and the Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living, to find out more about assistance from the council for disabled people (more on P2). Publicity and Fundraising strategies are being drawn up which take account of our limited resources while ensuring that we reach out to all the audiences that we can. Within the centre we're looking into using our existing resources, particularly the IT, more efficiently, and are very fortunate to have found Janet Hammersely who is providing database support and researching how to make it even more effective!

I'm feeling tired after just writing all this and it still doesn't cover everything!! Can you help out at all, by the way? There's lots still to be done, and if members have time and skills to share we can certainly use them!

Wanted

We could do with another filing cabinet as ours are almost overflowing! Before we purchase one, does anyone know where we could find one for free? Ideally it would have four drawers and able to take foolscap-size folders (a bit bigger than A4).

Did you know...

.... That you can help the centre maximise the income from your donations at no extra cost to yourself? If you are a UK taxpayer we can reclaim the tax you paid via Gift Aid—this currently would bring in an extra 28% of the donation.

..... If you attend regularly and give us a donation each time, you can set up a standing order to pay it each month. Much easier than remembering the cash each time!

200 Club:

The most recent 200 Club £10 winners are as follows:

21st June: Dorothy Wilkie 12th July: Nona Bowes
28th June: Lyndsay Gow 19th July: Charlie Brady
5th July: Nona Bowes

Congratulations!

Travel Insurance and website links

Are you going on holiday this summer? Travel Insurance is vital! If you have MS and are struggling to find insurance, try www.world-first.co.uk, who provide insurance for people with pre-existing medical conditions.

This information was provided by a member and the link is on our website. Do you have any useful sites to add on as well?

Will writing service

We were approached by The Will Writing Company, who are keen to raise awareness of the benefits of writing a proper will. Although DIY kits are available, a properly trained advisor not only knows about succession law but also family, property, trust and tax laws, and can provide guidance to ensure that as much of the estate as possible reaches the people that it is meant for.

The Will Writing Company will visit you at home. They offer a free initial consultation and review of your existing will and there are a variety of other services, including arranging Power of Attorney and Care Cost Planning. They are members of the Institute of Professional Willwriters and all legal work is done by solicitors from the Law Society of Scotland. They currently have a promotion on: if you tell them you read about them here, they will make a small donation to the Centre on completion of a service.

To contact them: www.twwcscotland.co.uk or on 0844 412 0776

Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living

Are you a disabled person living in the Lothians and want to:

- Find out more about your Independent Living Options?
- Control your own support?
- Decide who works for you?
- Decide when you receive support?

These are some of the questions asked by LCiL and they can help to provide the answers. They provide advice, support, training and information through their Independent Living Service and work closely with the four Local Authorities in the Lothians.

There is financial support available from your local council, known as Self Directed Support. If you are not currently receiving any assistance, but think that you need some, contact LCiL and they can talk you through the options.

More information is available in the Centre—please ask if you are interested. They can be contacted directly on 0131 475 2350 or via www.lothiancil.org.uk

Suggestions box:

The suggestions box was opened for the committee meeting on the 21st July. The following suggestions were revealed and decisions made:

- Choir: It was requested that a choir be formed! The committee thought this was a great idea! Further information will follow, but if you are interested please let a member of staff know.
- Newsletter delivery: It was suggested that newsletters should not be posted to those people who have appointments booked for oxygen. It is a good suggestion and is actually what we already try to do! If you have a booking, your newsletter is held in the centre for one week, but if you are unable to come to your appointment the newsletter is then posted out. We also email the newsletter out (last month was an exception because of the raffle tickets) so if you wish to receive it by email please do let us know. Indigo PR very kindly cover the cost of printing and postage, and emailing would keep their cost down too. Finally, there are always spare copies of the newsletter in the centre.
- Call waiting: We were requested to install Call Waiting on the phone line (instead of the current answerphone), but it was decided that this was not an appropriate function for a business to have, because it would mean putting other callers on hold. However, the committee and staff are very aware that usage of the line has increased significantly with all of the business activity that is now being done in the centre (this was previously done by the committee from their homes) and that the line is often engaged. We had already asked BT to give us a quote for a switchboard but the cost was very high, so instead a second phone line is to be installed. It is expected that the existing line will be kept for appointments and incoming calls and the new line will be used mainly for business or outgoing calls. The new line will be installed very soon, but in the meantime, the text line is [07922 268109](tel:07922268109) in case members need to advise us of cancellations or delays. We have also just switched providers from BT to Class Telecom, the approved provider to the voluntary sector, which is expected to save a significant amount of money each year.
- Reception: The committee have been asked to set up a small reception area to welcome people coming into the centre and direct enquiries to the right place. This has been approved and the layout is under consideration. The Centre has also been donated a new PC and screen for a public computer, with a keyboard, mouse and software to help people to use these more easily. This will be in the waiting area and will be connected to the internet, replacing the current Apple Mac.
- Leuchie House: the committee were asked to write to the MS Society on behalf of the membership to express their dismay at the recent decision to close Leuchie House. The request was hotly debated at the committee meeting, but in the end it was agreed that since the decision has been taken, it would be difficult to write a constructive letter, and furthermore it may be prejudicial to the work that is being done to build a better working relationship with the Society in the long-term. However, members are encouraged to write directly to the MS Society because the directors are aware of how upset many people are so all the correspondence is being collated and will be discussed at their next meeting. All members who have stayed at Leuchie House will receive a letter from the MS Society soon. There is also a petition to save Leuchie available in the centre—please ask if you wish to sign it.

Members are reminded to write their name and phone number on any suggestions that are placed in the box, as in general anonymous suggestions will not be considered.

Dates for your Diary

Coffee Morning: Saturday 21st August

Can collections: 31st July—Howgate shopping centre, Falkirk
28th August—Gyle shopping centre

If you can help with a Can Collection, please contact Alice by email or telephone. Chairs will be provided if needed.

Committee meetings: 15th September
17th November