

Limited Mobility

Mobility provides independence, particularly to disabled people, so it is a serious issue if it comes under threat. Government plans to cut the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for disabled people in residential care naturally caused QEF clients a great deal of concern.

The DLA mobility component helps meet some of the extra costs disabled people can face getting around. Without assistance for extra costs, such as electric wheelchairs, mobility aids and taxis where there is no accessible public transport, people face being trapped at home. With the mobility component of the DLA, people living in residential care would simply not have the money to get out and lead active lives.

In a desire to voice their concerns about the proposed cuts, Wendy and Stephen, residents at QEF Living Services (ILS), were interviewed by health psychologist Hilary and filmed by trainees from the Media Techniques Department at QEF Vocational Services. The interviews have been distributed to MPs and are viewable on the QEF website www.qef.org.uk and You Tube, entitled Mobility Cuts, and are personal views as to how the proposed cuts might affect them. Stephen later suggested that disabled people ought to protest in the streets but not the sort of protest where they surround a police van and tip it over.



Above: Dame Anne Begg MP receives the petition from Fiona Mactaggart MP and Peter Hand, Mencap

Maria Miller MP, Minister for Disabled People was unable to attend so the petition was accepted by Dame Anne Begg MP, Chair of the Work and Pensions Select Committee and handed over by Peter Hand, Senior Parliamentary Officer at Mencap and Fiona Mactaggart MP, Shadow Minister of Equalities Office. Both MPs spoke passionately and knowledgeably on the issue.

Mencap and 26 disability organisations have endorsed a report Don't Limit Mobility which may be downloaded from <http://mencap.org.uk/document.asp?id=20622> This report urges the government to reverse their decision in the light of the overwhelming evidence and strength of feeling regarding this measure and provides a coherent view of the impact these cuts will have.

As we go to press we are still awaiting the Government decision.



We are not made of money, taxis are expensive and we'll bankrupt ourselves.
Adam

I need a taxi to get around and it costs £20 for a single journey 2 minutes down the road.
Leonore

It will take away our independence.
Aidan M

It's going back to the time when disabled people were just left in bed all day and forgotten about. I can't get out of bed without a hoist, how do they expect me to get around.
Roz

It is one person saying one thing and someone else saying another (in reference to Maria Miller stating that the mobility needs of people in residential care homes should be funded by their local authorities). **Local authorities don't pay for my car, my train journey, my taxi or dial a ride. It is like they think we don't have a life.**
Stephen

It will stop everyone from getting around.
Aidan

No-one cares that we want to have it. (the opportunity to continue to do things for ourselves)
Molly



The Xmas Express delayed arrival

All aboard The Xmas Express! Well, not quite! December's Annual Christmas Show, at the Brain Injury Centre, Banstead, took place on a train 'The Xmas Express', so it was fitting perhaps that it was delayed, as rail services often are. The heavy pre-Christmas snow together with clients leaving to return home for Christmas meant the show had to be re-scheduled and

eventually took place on 19 January 2011. In addition, late changes to the cast meant a hectic time for those involved in the show but somehow, against the odds, they managed to pull it off.

A fun time was had by one and all but as always this is only ever achieved by a huge amount of goodwill and effort

from the staff involved, without which this would simply not be possible. Credit to everyone involved for producing another great show. As events like this slip easily under the category of 'fun', it is easy to overlook the rehabilitation benefits.

Through the medium of performing arts clients are able to work on speech

and language, communication, team work, creative ideas, reading, writing and following instructions. In addition, they need to demonstrate motivation, commitment, punctuality and attendance and many of these areas will be needed in some shape or form in their futures. It has been another wonderful experience to see clients develop and shine through this medium and is a sobering thought that the whole process will start all over again in about 8 months.

Did you know?

Nearly seventy-five percent of people in the United Kingdom donate money to charities during their lifetime, but less than five percent leave money for charities after their deaths. Charities provide a public benefit and are increasingly important in the current economic climate. There are many unfortunate people and animals who, without our help, would have great difficulty in this harsh world.

Free of Inheritance Tax

Did you know that charitable donations in a will are completely free of Inheritance Tax? Legacies are the largest single source of voluntary income to UK charities. Some charities rely on legacies for the large part of their income. While many legacies will be modest, others may be very substantial. Although two thirds of the population supports charities, only one in seven wills currently include a charitable bequest.

To be free from Inheritance Tax, legacies must be made to UK, EU, Norwegian or Icelandic charities that are registered with HMRC for tax purposes.

How the tax relief works

Inheritance Tax is charged on the balance of the estate that exceeds a certain amount after any outstanding debts have been settled.

In order to leave money to a charity, a donor needs to make a will or amend an existing one. They should seek advice from a suitably qualified professional, typically a solicitor or accountant.

Leaving a legacy to charity is an amazing way to make your generosity last beyond your lifetime.



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QEF works with people living with physical and learning disabilities or acquired brain injuries to support them to achieve their goals for life.

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QEF Happening

Spring 2011

Newsletter for Queen Elizabeth's Foundation for Disabled People



With the close of the 75th Anniversary Year, QEF held a reception at St James's Palace, the Sovereign's constitutional residence, on 26 January to celebrate the next 75 years of QEF.

Introduced by QEF President, Corinna, Lady Hamilton of Dalzell, HRH The Earl of Wessex welcomed the guests to the Palace and applauded QEF's work over the 75 years and for the future. Vice Chairman James Wates thanked Her Majesty the Queen for allowing the reception to be held and welcomed the assembled guests.

Guests were drawn from all aspects of QEF support, vice-patrons, vice-presidents, trustees, ambassadors, trust representatives, local government dignitaries and officers, corporate supporters, donors, committee members and volunteers.

Posing the question

CEO Jonathan Powell then addressed the room, posing the question of how the visionary founders might view QEF's achievements. And suggesting that the answer might be "with considerable delight tinged with a little disappointment".

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Considerable Delight at St James's Palace

"Delight", Jonathan explained, "at establishing QEF, as we are now, and supporting thousands of people with employment-related training and into jobs. Because we now have a better success rate in achieving sustained and unsupported employment than any other government funded programme in the UK. Because we now run a Mobility Centre where hundreds of disabled people every year have their driving ability assessed and are advised on vehicle adaptations. Because our Independent Living Services now provide exceptional quality care for up to 40 people with severe, multiple and usually congenital disabilities at any one time. Because our Brain Injury Centre at Banstead has provided outstanding expertise in the form of education, therapy and rehabilitation for hundreds of young people who have survived a traumatic and life-changing illness or accident.

"So, they (the founders) would have much to be delighted about and proud of.

Unfinished business

"So why disappointment or a feeling of unfinished business? Society has not yet reached the point where disabled people really do have the same opportunities as everyone else. And the challenge remains to maintain the standard of facilities and accommodation rather better than we have been able to afford to do.

"So that, for us, is the dual challenge of the next 75 years. To continue the struggle to provide real equality of opportunity for disabled people, not just in Surrey and the South East, but across the United Kingdom. And to enable the creation of a state of the art provision once again."

With these thoughts opened, HRH The Earl of Wessex circulated amongst the guests, impressing all with his engaging manner and humour.

The challenge for the next 75 years is clear.

achieving goals for life qef.org.uk

Reasons to run

Running for charity is a popular way of fundraising and can be deeply fulfilling personally. Here are stories from two QEF supporters who have dug out their trainers and hit the road and mud for our cause, for which we are truly grateful.

Grim Tribute

Support for QEF is often inspired by personal contact or involvement with our Services or by the moving stories of



"I felt that helping those who'd supported him would be a fitting tribute."
Dan Wakefield

friends and relatives who live or have lived with disability. Dan Wakefield's decision to run for QEF was motivated by a dear friend Steven Mottram. Dan takes up the story:

"In June 2010 my school friend Steven Mottram, our Head Boy and inspiration, sadly passed away at the age of 29. With support from QEF Neuro Rehabilitation Services and others he'd battled illness for 12 years. I hadn't seen much of him in recent years and felt that helping those who'd supported him would be a fitting tribute.

"After discussion with QEF I decided upon a sponsored run, set up a Just Giving page and raised £32.6. Now it was time for business - the event.

"On Saturday 15th January 2011, I arrived at the Army's vehicle testing tracks in Aldershot, to participate in the Grim Challenge. The Grim is an 8-mile off-road course where competitors run, wade and crawl their way up hills, through water filled ravines and under camouflage netting. Grim is the word!

"The atmosphere at the start line was fantastic, a combination of excitement and fear of what was to come. With a reminder from the organisers that "if it looks bigger than a puddle then it probably is!" ringing in our ears we were off. Thoughts of Steven helped particularly through the last miles, and after 1 hour 40 minutes I crossed the finish line cold, wet, muddy and eager for a hot drink and change of clothes.

"It was a fantastic day, undoubtedly worth every ounce of effort. I will certainly continue to support QEF and all the good work they do, in memory of Steven, a wonderful friend. He will be lovingly remembered by all who knew him.

Nothing to Laugh at

Come the event, come the competitor. The Virgin London Marathon has inspired thousands to dedicate time to training and running for a cause but initially nothing could have been further from Laura Townsend's thoughts. Laura explains:

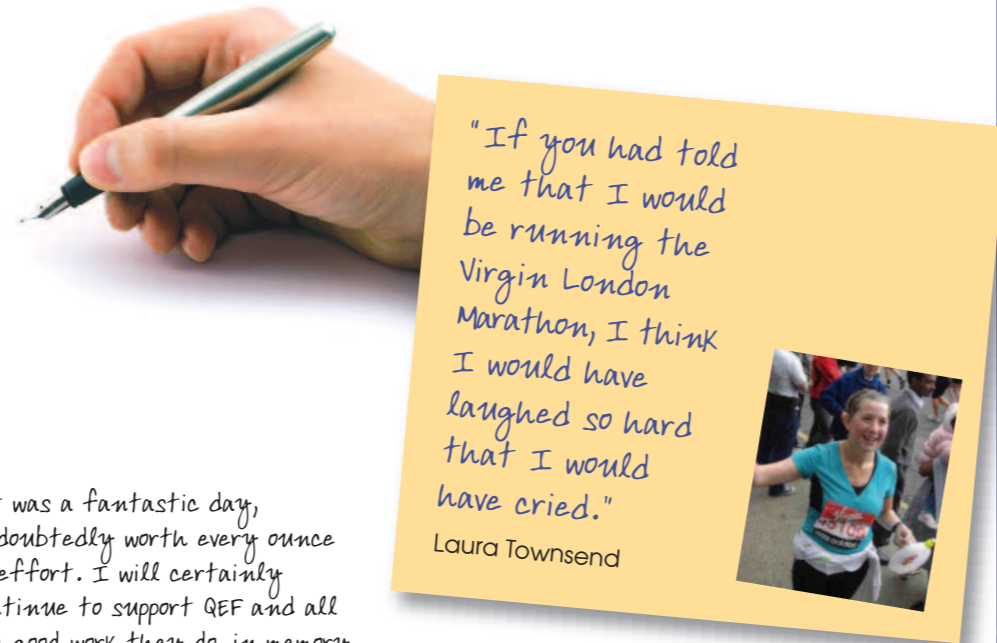
"If you had told me back in May 2009 that I would be running the Virgin London Marathon the following April, I think I would have laughed so hard that I would have cried - before you would have stood a woman who hadn't run since she left school some 10 years earlier.

"Somehow in April 2009 a seed was planted, whilst traipsing around London with Chris, a work colleague, trying to spot my close friend Sheila running the marathon. While waiting at Crossharbour, Mile 17, Chris said to me "When are you planning to run the marathon?" To which I replied "I would never be able to run a marathon". Over the next few days as I watched Sheila collect the sponsorship money, it dawned on me that maybe someday I would like to participate. At this point I wasn't

expecting to be able to take part the following year, but I started using the treadmill at the gym rather than my beloved bike. By June I felt able to join Sheila on her lunchtime run and it was at that point that I really started thinking "I can do this".

"My next decision was to choose a charity to run for. QEF had some significant draws for me. For one, even though it is a national charity it is actually based quite close to where I live. I would often cycle past it and see the residential facility which looks like an inviting and calming place. The second reason was the support given by QEF to a family member of a work colleague after an accident which left him with a serious head injury. He found their help invaluable. The help and support just wouldn't have been available to him without donations to QEF.

"In the end, I found running the Virgin London Marathon and knowing that I had helped, in some small way to keep this amazing charity going, so hugely rewarding that I would not change the blisters and sore legs for the world."



Exceptional Standards at QEF Mobility Services

Tom Brake, Lib Dem MP for Carshalton and Wallington, unreservedly praised QEF Mobility Services staff for their exceptional standards in gaining their accreditation award from the Forum of Mobility Centres. QEF Mobility Services was presented with the award at their Carshalton centre with Tom Brake the guest of honour.

Tom commented, "I am very much aware of the value of the work of QEF Mobility Services and the difference it makes to so many lives. All the staff team, full time and volunteers, have contributed to maintain such exceptional standards."

Ed Passant, CEO of the Forum of Mobility Centres, presented QEF Mobility Services Manager Sal Grier with the award saying "This accreditation award is not simply a tick box exercise; it is a very genuine inspection of the standards of service. I have been hugely impressed with how well QEF have responded to our expectations."

Sal Grier replied, "I'm very proud of our staff, service providers and volunteers who have all worked extremely hard throughout the

year to maintain the high standards that enable us to support people with disability. Our outstanding service is evidenced by the large number of complimentary letters that we receive from clients and visitors: and now the pinnacle of today's award of achievement and recognition by the Forum. To know that the Centre has achieved exceptional standards and been highly commended is a reward well deserved by everyone."

QEF Mobility Services staff also attended the presentation together with QEF CEO Jonathan Powell and Garry Billing, Principal of QEF Vocational Services, and Trustees David Hypher DL and Ted Gates MBE.

The accreditation term runs for three years.



Amber was studying for a psychology degree at Southampton University and was a typical sociable student, who enjoyed going to the gym, participating in sports and going to the cinema.

Regaining Independence

In August 2009, when she was just 19, she sustained a severe brain injury caused by multiple strokes. This resulted in significant communication, physical, cognitive, emotional, social and educational/vocational difficulties. Her brain injury made it impossible for her to return to complete her studies or continue her active social life.

is improving rapidly. Due to her condition she has difficulty in comprehending complex written information but she has focused on developing her literacy and numeracy skills. She is currently working towards Entry Level 3 in numeracy and Entry Level 2 in reading.

Working on long-term goals

Although it seems unlikely that Amber will be able to return to her former studies, she is striving towards further education and work experience. Such is her determination towards working on her long-term goals that she has commenced an external work experience placement as a support assistant at a local Resource Centre for people with disability.

Amber has shown great courage, ambition and motivation in dealing with her stroke and subsequent difficulties. Continued hard work and enthusiasm has resulted in active participation within the activities of daily living and she is a role model for other young stroke survivors.

When Amber came to QEF Neuro Rehabilitation Services in February 2010 she was confined to a wheelchair, had severe expressive dysphasia and required assistance with most activities of daily living. At the service she participated in a variety of therapeutic sessions, including occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, psychology, art and design, vocational, educational and recreational activities.

Personal responsibility

Amber made substantial progress in her rehabilitation at QEF Neuro Rehabilitation Services and is now able to walk without a walking aid and is using public transport with distant support. Amber has also moved into an independent living unit at the service where, with support from an occupational therapist, she is responsible for completing her personal care routine, planning and preparing meals, shopping and domestic tasks. Although Amber still requires some support to plan her meals, she can prepare light cold snacks independently. At present, more complex meals require support to complete owing to safety issues.

Amber has worked hard towards developing her communication skills and reading ability and her comprehension of written information



Donations Welcome

The demand for our services and facilities is ever increasing and we are doing our utmost to keep pace with the number of disabled people who need assistance to achieve a greater degree of independence. With a combination of care, training and practical help, we can achieve our goal to turn disability into ability, particularly as we are able to offer such a wide range of help to those who need it.

Visit our website www.qef.org.uk for various ways to donate conveniently.

While there you might consider becoming a QEF Friend and arrange a standing order. This will enable us to plan more confidently for future projects and initiatives. It is simple to set up and gives QEF an income we can rely on for planning.

Naturally we are always happy to take postal donations (send to our Leatherhead office) or please call 01372 841131 for telephone donations.