It's about supporting Spinal Injuries Scotland help people who sustain a spinal cord injury.

Until it happens to your family, none of us will ever really understand what it feels like to have a loved one seriously injured as a result of the negligence of others. We know that. Our job is to understand the law and bring our many years of experience, knowledge and expertise to bear, making it our mission to help where we can.

You need answers to questions and where appropriate fair compensation to financially assist with the challenges ahead.

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Contents
Autumn 2014

02 Welcome
03 News
05 Link Evolves to Mentoring Scheme
06 Sports News
07 A Robot Called REX by Melanie Reid
08 Australian Dream
12 The Silverstone Story by Graeme Quinn
14 Member Profile – Frank Swan
16 Sammi Kinghorn and Glasgow 2014
19 Holidays Made Easy
20 Member Profile – Mohammed Sohail
22 Access to Work
23 Our Dynamic Earth
24 Legal Eagle
25 Welfare Advice
26 Thank You to our Fundraisers
29 Christmas Cards
30 Classified Advertising
Welcome

What an amazing summer for Scotland. Lots of medals at the Commonwealth Games, festivals all over the country and the sun was shining for most of the time. A huge political decision is now looming as we head into autumn and we would like to hear from members about the referendum decision once it is known in September. If we receive enough responses we will run a feature in the winter issue.

Now we are into the shorter days we need to be thinking about staying upbeat and positive. Our member profile on Page 20 shows what a positive attitude can do to help with recovery following a spinal injury. We also have inspiring travel features and ideas for great days (and nights!) out.

So please read on and please let us know about your views and ideas. We love hearing from our members. Happy reading.

The Editorial Team

Research Participants WANTED

The Scottish Centre for Innovation in Spinal Cord Injury, based at QENSIU, is looking for volunteers with tetraplegia to take part in a Hand Rehabilitation Study.

The research study is looking into the effect of active participation of patients in a new rehabilitation programme. You may be familiar with electrical stimulation of hand and arm muscles, as you might have experienced it as part of occupational therapy.

It is believed that patient-controlled electrical stimulation would have a stronger effect than a therapist driven stimulation, because it is simultaneously training patients’ muscles and the brain. Researchers will use a Brain-Computer Interface based on electroencephalography (EEG), to measure intentions to move the hand. BCI system will activate electrical stimulator that will stimulate the hand muscles.

Volunteers will receive 20 therapeutic sessions lasting up to one hour at the Queen Elizabeth National Spinal Injuries Unit, Southern General Hospital, Glasgow. You would also be asked to participate in initial and final assessment sessions that will help us to measure the effect of the therapy.

If you are between 18 and 70 years of age, have had a spinal cord injury leading to tetraplegia in 2011 or earlier, and would like more information about the project, please contact Dr Vuckovic by telephone on 07906 441955 or 0141 232 7884 or by e-mail at Aleksandra.Vuckovic@Glasgow.ac.uk.
Parking Success

On a visit to Dobbies Garden Centre in Cumbernauld, Peer Support Volunteer Andy Nisbet discovered that the disabled parking bays were full – with trolleys and wooden pallets.

Andy contacted the store manager and received this favourable response: “After your discussion with me last month I pursued a solution through Dobbies property department. We are going to excavate an area, to the right of our storage containers, which will house all of our pallets and recycled cardboard and plastics. This will restore our current disabled space back to how it was originally intended.

“Two contractors have visited the site and quotes are now with my head office. I would anticipate that work would commence and be completed within the next two months. This will give me a permanent solution going forward. In the short term, we have relocated the pallets away from the disabled area freeing up the space immediately.

“I am not in a position yet to reline the car park so at this stage the spaces in the disabled parking area will remain the same. Thanks again for highlighting our deficiencies around our disabled parking and I hope to see you soon.”

Well done to Andy for highlighting this issue and to Kenny Duke at Dobbies for acknowledging and resolving the issue.

If any readers have other success stories or areas of concern, please contact the SIS office.

Curling Event

Stirling Wheelchair Curling Club is hosting a new event – the Stirling Wheelchair Curling International Invitation – which will be held on 20-22 October at The Peak, Stirling Sports Village.

There will be top Paralympic teams competing and it will be played as an eight team round robin. There is an excellent viewing area from the restaurant / bar and ease of access to all areas for wheelchairs is assured.

For more information contact Fiona Glass, Secretary on figlass@btinternet.com
Euan’s Guide is a really useful and interesting website that has been devised by Edinburgh born Euan MacDonald and his family. Euan was 29 years of age when he was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease and now uses a wheelchair. He still enjoys going out to bars, restaurants, cinemas, music festivals, and sports grounds. “I’m always looking for new places to try but can only find out if access is suitable through a process of trial and error.”

Euan’s Guide is designed to make life easier for disabled people, offering them reliable, peer-reviewed information on hundreds of venues across Scotland (and beyond).

The user’s experience of travel and entertainment venues plus every other kind of public place is more personal than ‘official’ sources. Many venues that boast disabled access in theory do not always follow through. Similarly, there are places in which helpful, considerate staff make up for technical shortcomings in the level of access provided.

This listings and review website helps disabled people and their families know which venues are truly accessible. “A generic disabled access badge doesn’t always tell the whole story,” says Euan. “Our website can give you confidence that someone in your situation has been there and can make a recommendation. The website makes it easier to enjoy experiences that many people might take for granted.”

The site has more than 450 listings and hopes this number will increase rapidly in the months ahead.

“We need your help to achieve this. Please review your favourite places, listing your venues or simply telling people about us.”
Spinal Injuries Scotland has been operating the ‘Link Scheme’ for a number of years now with good success. The link scheme is where we put people together, whether it is someone with a spinal cord injury (SCI) or the relative of someone who has a SCI.

We do our very best to match the following criteria – gender, level of injury (if they have an injury), age and the geographical location, all of which when possible.

The success we have had with the Link Scheme has been good but we feel that there could be better service provision and, with the help of the Scottish Mentoring Network, we will be changing the ‘Link Scheme’ to a Mentoring Scheme. This will not happen overnight but we have identified a need for such a service in Scotland, so we are embarking on this new service provision.

Rather than starting off with huge expectations and trying to train all mentors as quickly as possible, we will be introducing the scheme in a more calculated fashion where we will be training a small amount of mentors at the outset. We will then expand in a controlled manner, where every new mentor will undergo training approved by the Scottish Mentoring Network, which will lead to the Spinal Injuries Scotland Mentoring Scheme being accredited by the Scottish Mentoring Service.

We have already identified a number of candidates who will undergo training as mentors and, once this training has been completed, we will be looking for more recruits to train as mentors.

We will be advertising positions for mentors in Newsline and other forms of social media when the time is right. If this is something you think you might be interested in, keep an eye out for the call for more mentors.

By Dougy Johnstone

Link Evolves to Mentoring Scheme
Dressage by Emma Douglas

It has been an action packed 2014 for me so far. I had an amazing time at The Nirvana Spa Para Dressage Winter Championships in April. This was held at Hartpury College, alongside the able bodied Winter Championships. I won my first national title with my horse Murphy, a terrific horse that has been like a dream come true for me. Unfortunately our trip home was a little more adventurous than planned, having a blow out tyre incident with our lorry!

The month of May witnessed the completion of my qualification for the British Para Dressage Championships with both horses – Murphy and Solly. And we had a successful end to the month with Murphy again winning the freestyle to music class at the Para Home International. I also learned that I had been selected to represent Great Britain on both horses, Solly’s first international and Murphy’s 4th. My 4th time too!

June was spent training hard and getting prepared for the British Para Dressage Championships which were held in June at Hickstead. This was another great experience taking both horses, and having to adapt my riding quickly to suit each horse. Solly came second both days behind Natasha Baker the current Paralympic double gold medallist, and Murphy came 3rd on both days behind Solly! So I had a very successful outing with them both. Unfortunately on the Championship day Murphy developed a case of colic and ended up having to be hospitalised for four days.

Bishop Burton CPEDI2* senior international was held on 2–5 July, three days of competition. We had a tremendous time competing here, Solly didn’t put a foot wrong and we came 2nd every day, again behind Natasha Baker on her new young horse.

I have qualified for the National Championships taking place on 19 September with both horses, but have decided to just take Solly. So I am currently training hard. Then preparation for the Winter Championships with hopes to qualify with Solly for the first time. Still very much living the dream!
A Robot Called REX

By Melanie Reid

So it’s come to this. A remake of Wallace and Gromit in The Wrong Trousers. Starring me as Wallace, enclosed from the waist down in a walking robot called REX. With Gromit, played by Dave, trying and failing to capture the action on a smartphone, while a mad inventor called Richard Little controls my trousers.

The trousers hum and whirl happily, like an expensive washing machine on slow spin. They stand me up from the sofa and now I’m upright, stepping forward languorously; swaying from side to side as the robot takes my legs in big, careful steps.

“Ooo er,” I squeak, “I feel like I’m leaning too far right.”

“You’re completely stable,” says Richard. “You’re a lot safer in this than you are on those bloody big horses.”

**He’s so right.** The robot trousers keep stepping. Wallace becomes Schwarzenegger; I am invincible. Really, I just have to relax and enjoy the view from on high again. It feels peculiar, way up here, but it also feels weirdly normal, towering over everyone, like I used to do, a million years ago. We’re in the spinal unit for this demo, and there’s the usual surprised chorus: “My word, you are tall.” Were tall, more like. But I’m trying to do the posture bit, shoulders back and down, diaphragm lifted, eyes up: as if I’m on a horse about to enter at A for a dressage test. Trouble is, my body is set, seat-shaped, from inactivity; nobody warned it what was coming. Suddenly my guts have turned to water and waves of nausea are sweeping over me.

I pray to the God of Coloplast – she does exist – not to burst on me; and gesture to Gromit to grab a nearby Lidl carrier bag for airsickness. Please don’t let me ruin these £90,000 magic trousers by throwing up on them, especially in front of an audience. Richard pivots REX, me inside, and I walk back to the sofa and sit down. Without being sick.

**Eight short steps for a woman, one giant leap for the soul of the disabled.** For a first go, it was necessarily brief, but I felt liberated, physically stretched, psychologically boosted. I wanted more. How I would have loved to sit, then go again in 15 minutes. But there are others in wheelchairs queuing for REX.

It is hard, when you’re paralysed, leaving the comfort zone of your chair. It’s the one place where you can gather some tattered dignity around you. Leaving it can simply ram home the realisation of all you’ve lost. **But REX is an eye-opener.** Although the exoskeleton doesn’t mean we regain power, its use has been shown to stimulate muscle memory, improve sleep, reduce pain, and boost spirits. Moving upright also helps hugely in the fight against paralysis’s three horsemen of the apocalypse – bladder, bowel and skin problems.

The **device is also practical.** In Los Angeles a plastic surgeon with a spinal injury is already using his to perform operations: it allows him to stand, move around the table and still have his hands free for face lifts. There are other exoskeletons in production – like the one Claire Lomas walked the marathon in – but they require crutches and are therefore not hands free (and unsuitable for tetraplegics with impaired hands like me).

The far bigger reason REX is thrilling, though, is that it’s a signal that finally paralysis is on the public radar. Things are happening. Scientists, bio-engineers, opinion formers, big money – at last they see it as an issue.

**REX has been a life’s work for Richard, a Scots engineer who emigrated to New Zealand 20 years ago.** His company floated on the stock market and REX is now in commercial production. The devices are being leased to spinal units for therapy and research; and wealthy individuals are buying them.

When we get home, I examine my phone to see Dave’s video of me in the magic trousers. He’s captured ten minutes perfectly – but only of the floor boards in the spinal unit. Gromit strikes again.
I had yearned to visit Australia for many years, but was put off by the thought of the long flight and a lack of cash. However, in April 2013, I decided to be in the sunshine by Christmas. So I booked the flight, (Edinburgh – Kuala Lumpur – Sydney), and then started saving hard. I was in the fortunate position of having wonderful family near Sydney who insisted that I stay with them. I hadn’t seen my auntie or cousins for over 40 years so an emotional reunion was in store.

Never having flown while using a wheelchair, and travelling on my own, it was a bit of a worry for me. It turned out that there was nothing to worry about. I checked several times that all the airlines I would be travelling with were aware that I required assistance and was assured that the requests were in place. Visa and insurance sorted and I was ready to go.

December arrived before I knew it and the flying nerves kicked in, but I knew it would all be worth it. After checking in my suitcase at Edinburgh airport, I was directed to a specified area to await the assistant. He arrived in good time and insisted that he pushed the chair and wouldn’t let me push myself. Making sure that the vibrant orange ticket stating that the chair had to be returned to the aircraft door was attached, I was first to board. The crew made sure I was settled in my seat before the other passengers boarded. Suffice to say, that same level of assistance awaited me at each airport and I was impressed by the service throughout the whole journey.

I don’t think I have felt more excited than when I arrived in Sydney. My cousin Joanne, along with her son David, was there to greet me. The heat hit me and I thought I was in heaven. It took a couple of days to get over the flight so I was glad that I was there for a whole month. I couldn’t wait to see the sights that I had only known through photographs and television. Joanne and her husband Ray knew the list of places I wanted to see and were fantastic, transporting me all over and making sure I had the holiday of a lifetime.

We started off with a day at Wollongong beach. A clean sandy beach, clear water and glorious sunshine, I definitely was NOT in Scotland. Al fresco dining was also to be a feature of my stay, something else I wasn’t quite used to. I did find out here that pushing a wheelchair long distances in this heat was going to be a strain and I didn’t want to burden people with having to push me anywhere. With this in mind, I sought out an electric scooter for hire. It made things so much easier and, after all, I wasn’t here to work.

Accessibility in shops, cinemas and restaurants was all great, so there was nothing to interfere with my quest to see the sights. Darling Harbour was an area that warranted a full day’s visit. It was here that I tasted my first kangaroo steak and bought my kangaroo skin hat. I hope they were from the same kangaroo as I wouldn’t like being responsible for the demise of more than one animal. I was able to take the ferry and hop on and off, which was a great way to get around. After sailing under the famous Sydney Harbour Bridge, we alighted near the Opera House and from a short distance, it seemed a lot smaller than I had imagined. I soon changed my mind when I was directly in front of it, and I could see just what a huge and magnificent building it is.
Above: David, Joanne and Jim at the Blue Mountains

Bottom, left: Kuranda Rainforest from the Skyrail Goldola

Bottom, centre: View from the Skyrail Goldola

Below, left: Jim at the Great Barrier Reef

Below, right: Jim at the Bondi Beach Lifeboat Station

Bottom, centre: Train to Kuranda
After a couple of days relaxing, the Blue Mountains were to be my next trip. They are so named because of a blue haze which comes from the mixing of sunlight with drops of oil released by the eucalyptus that blankets the region’s vast tablelands and valleys. After a couple of hours drive, I was taken aback by the fantastic views across the mountains and occasionally could be found pinching myself to make sure I wasn’t dreaming.

Christmas in Australia was surreal; still the same trees, lights and decorations, but odd to see them all in 35 degrees and glorious sunshine. Christmas dinner in the sun wearing shorts and a t shirt was so strange, but something I would love to repeat.

After an equally ‘strange’ but hot New Year, it was time for me to head for Cairns in Queensland. Using the internet, I was able to book everything for this part of my trip before I left Scotland, and all that was left to do was enjoy. By this time I was taking flying in my stride and actually looking forward to it.

I had chosen Cairns as the launch pad for a visit to the Great Barrier Reef and was far from disappointed by yet more beautiful scenery and the superb views from my hotel balcony. I had booked an all day visit to the reef with Quicksilver Cruises in Port Douglas.

I informed the company in advance that I would be using a wheelchair and as soon as I departed the coach, I was greeted by a member of staff who knew my name. Even this small detail was impressive and I was to be continually impressed by the quality and service provided by every member of the Quicksilver crew, both during the 90 minute cruise and on the day I was to spend on the platform moored out to sea.

Crew members were always on hand, giving any assistance required as well as chatting about the reef, Queensland, life in Australia, in fact about anything in which I was interested and that was a multitude of subjects. Being a non-swimmer, I hadn’t planned on getting into the water but was eventually persuaded by Jo, yet another terrific member of a marvellous crew, to use the water powered lift, which would lower me into the water. This and an underwater coral viewing trip in the semi-submersible vessel were just two of the highlights of yet another fantastic day.

Whilst in Cairns, I also visited Kuranda, which is a village located high in the rainforest. This involved a train journey to 1000 feet above Cairns. There was a separate coach on the train for wheelchair users with comfortable armchairs in it for any companions. Yet again, I was to be impressed by the service and assistance given by every member of staff I met.

My return back down to sea level was to be by an exhilarating sky rail ride. I was able to take in the views of the rainforest from above on the ride back down, where a wheelchair taxi, provided at no extra charge, waited to take me back to my hotel. Time for a night out with a couple of friendly Ozzies I met while there, before heading back to Sydney and my last week in Australia.

One last place on my must see list was Bondi Beach and Joanne, my lovely cousin, drove us there on my last day. I had been watching Bondi Rescue on TV and here I was, actually standing beside that same lifeguard station. My list for this trip completed, we headed back to the sad task of packing for my homeward bound trip. I could never thank my lovely family enough for making this the holiday to beat all holidays.

The long flight home was pretty gruelling. More so than the outward flights, but then I didn’t have the excitement of my trip of a lifetime to look forward to. Finally I arrived back in Edinburgh; tired and just a bit sore, but with so many memories that I would cherish forever.

To anyone thinking about visiting Australia I have just two words... DO IT.

I know I want to go back some day. I hope I manage to and I hope it’s sooner rather than later.

For more detailed information here are some links to websites:

Darling Harbour: www.darlingharbour.com
Quicksilver Cruises: www.quicksilver-cruises.com
Bondi Beach: www.bondivillage.com
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I have been a big fan of Formula One for several years and decided to fulfill a long held ambition and see a race live.

The race weekend starts with practice sessions. Cars are checked and all-important data is reviewed as to how well each car is performing. Team engineers can make minor changes to fine tune the overall performance of the cars. They also test new components and parts to see if it can increase the overall competitiveness of the cars and close the performance gap on rival teams.

This year in Formula One the sport has undergone some radical changes with the introduction of more energy-efficient, hybrid power engines. A lot of the technology in road cars today has been developed in Formula One.

My Silverstone adventure started on the Saturday, arriving mid-morning. There are several accessible viewing areas located around the circuit. My tickets were for Club Corner (at the end of fast section of track with a few corners just before the Start/Finish Line and looking directly over at the pits). This was a good 20 minute push from where we entered the track. We reached our seats just as the third and final free practice session finished; this time was again used to carry out final checks to the cars ahead of Qualifying for the race on Sunday. Once a Formula One car leaves its pit garage at the start of Qualifying Session it enters ‘Parc ferme’ conditions, meaning no major changes can be made to the set-up of the car.

Qualifying got underway and gave me my first real taste of a Formula One live. It was great to see, hear and watch the best drivers in the world race against the clock to set the fastest time. Everything was going perfectly for, arguably the crowd’s favourite, Britain’s own Lewis Hamilton who drives for Mercedes (currently the fastest team in F1).

Heading in to the third and final part of Qualifying (Pole Position Shootout), everything was looking good for the British driver to take Pole Position. The track was still damp due to rain showers but the drivers had adapted to the conditions. Lewis Hamilton put in a great performance on his first attempt and topped the timing screens much to the crowd’s (and my) delight! Hamilton then decided part way through his last timed lap that he couldn’t improve his time and drew into the pits as the checkered flag dropped (signalling the end of Qualifying). With rival teams and drivers still on track, we watched as they started to go faster, and saw the track in front of us start to dry out and the puddles of water disappear. Disaster, Lewis Hamilton dropped from a potential Pole Position to sixth – the collective disbelief of pretty much everyone around us was clear to see.

My Silverstone Survival Tips

Pack for all types of weather – sunglasses and sun cream to wet weather gear, be prepared for four seasons in one day! Manual wheelchair users consider chunky tyres and, if possible, a freewheel – some ground around the stand is gravel and very loose and was difficult to push on.
Returning to Silverstone on a hot and sunny Sunday morning, I had booked a hospitality package for the day. I was immediately approached by a volunteer Silverstone Race Maker. I showed my hospitality pass and her supervisor radioed for the Wheelchair Accessible Hospitality Transport. This took me to the hospitality area I had booked for the day named Lakeside, which is next to Stowe Corner (one of the fastest corners on the circuit).

We enjoyed a fantastic meal and made good use of the complimentary bar! There was also plenty of entertainment with a live jazz band and various performers.

The cars headed to the grid and we were racing... but not for long! The Ferrari Driver, Kimi Raikkonen, had an accident at 150mph shortly after the start, which caused damage to a section of the safety barrier around the track, meaning the race had to be stopped. It was later reported that the impact was 47G (47 times the force of gravity).

Thankfully, he was not seriously hurt, just minor bruising to his legs. It just shows you how strong and safe modern Formula One cars are!

The race re-started and Lewis Hamilton worked his way through the field of cars in front of him. He eventually took the lead and stayed there and, 52 laps later, this resulted in an emphatic win. This was his second British Grand Prix success and he received a truly amazing reception on the podium.

It was a truly special weekend spent with family and friends and something I’d do again in a heartbeat!

Silverstone has a Disability Booking Team, information regarding booking for all events (F1, Moto GP, etc), including the Personal Assistant Ticket Scheme, can be found on the Silverstone Circuit Website: www.silverstone.co.uk/visiting/disabled-information
When I was going through my rehab I was told a fair bit about weight and healthy eating. I also heard stories about how it was very hard to lose weight as a fulltime wheelchair user. I have spoken with several peers over the years who have mentioned that they have tried with little or no success to lose weight or they don’t know how to lose weight.

At the time of my injury I weighed around 14st/89kgs and was very active. After my surgery and around the start of my rehab I had come down to about 13st/82kgs. I was in the QENSIU for 23 weeks in total and, by the time of my discharge in January 2006, my weight was back to around 14st/89kgs.

After my first year post discharge as a full time wheelchair user I had seen my weight increase to around the 15st/95kgs meaning that I had gained a stone in weight. At this time, I tried a few ways to lose weight with no great success. I did, however, watch my weight closely and managed to hold it steady for several years.

Over the last few years my weight has slowly increased and, after having two full-board cruise holidays in May and October 2013, my weight topped out at 17st 5lbs/110kgs. This was the point I decided that something had to be done so I turned to my friends and family for their diet experiences, then followed that up with the good old internet. After checking numerous diet websites and forums, the common theme was that as I was fairly inactive and exercising was limited, there was nothing that looked suitable for me. I then came across The Cambridge Diet website and I was hopeful that it might just be the answer.

So, armed with the details of my local diet consultant Scott Paris, I sent him an email with my basic details and asked a few questions. Within a few hours I had a reply and called him to arrange a time for a visit and chat. Scott left me Cambridge paperwork and fact sheets, and went away with more information on myself, which he was going to forward to a Cambridge doctor for his views and thoughts. There were no concerns with my medication and the doctor’s only concerns were with bowel management and skin condition. If I was able to watch and control these issues, then I was good to go with the diet. Paperwork was completed, I was good to choose my Cambridge products and start on the diet.

I picked the level that was best suited for me and the products that I preferred, and then the diet began – that was 28 November 2013 at 17st 5lbs/110kgs. I chose ‘Sole Source’ which is four Cambridge products per day along with 2500mls of fluid.

I constantly monitored my bowel routine and my skin condition and, after I had lost my first 3st/20kgs, I contacted the QENSIU and arranged to get a cushion pressure check just to make sure things were all in order. I did not suffer from any side effects and found the programme fairly easy and straight forward to follow. I had a weekly appointment with my Consultant which consisted of recording my weight and several measurements then picking out my coming week’s food products. I was not given a target weight – it was left to me to decide where I felt comfortable and happy and what could be maintained during my daily routine and lifestyle.

I progressed up the levels, coming off the diet completely on 15 May 2014. At this point I weighed 12st 8lbs/80kgs.

I now eat a lot more food than I have ever done but with two main differences – it is good healthy food, and it is regular, with a snack between main meals meaning that I never go any longer than three hours without having some food.

The benefits, other than the obvious weight loss of 4st 11lbs/30kgs, are that I have been able to come off my blood pressure medication completely, I have halved my pain medication, my BMI is down from 33 to 23, and my double golfer’s elbow has completely cleared. I am far fitter for transferring and I generally feel fitter and healthier than I have in a long time.

If this article is of interest and you feel that I can be of any help to you then I can be contacted through the office at SIS or frankswan@btinternet.com

My Cambridge Consultant who is happy to be contacted is Scott Paris on 07712 139427 or scottparis99@yahoo.co.uk

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The Glasgow Commonwealth Games has been judged the ‘Best Ever’ by athletes, media and audiences around the world.

The 2014 Games featured the biggest ever number of Para-Sport medal events in the history of the Games – 22 in total, spanning five sports. The five Para-Sports included in the Glasgow programme were athletics, swimming, powerlifting, lawn bowls and, for the first time, track cycling. The Para-Sport Athletics Team Scotland was made up of only two men and three women.

Samantha Kinghorn was one of these proud athletes and is an SIS member.

The 18 year old was born in Melrose in the Borders and now lives in Gordon. She is a full-time athlete, training with clubs Gala Harriers and Red Star.

The Story of the Games
Sammi’s Commonwealth Games event was the track event, T54 1500m

There were 14 athletes competing in two heats for the eight places in the final race. Sammi finished 3rd in her heat in a time of 4:03.41 giving her an automatic qualifier into the final.

“I can only try and explain my time at the Commonwealth Games. It was such an amazing experience and I cannot believe that I was given the opportunity to race so early in my career for Scotland in Glasgow.

“The opening ceremony, oh my goodness, it was incredible, the two hours spent queuing was worth it. The noise was tremendous and made me feel absolutely amazing and set me up for the rest of the Games. My heat on the Tuesday was perfect and I finished 3rd, automatically qualifying for the final, which heightened my confidence.”

Sammi finished 5th in the final on Thursday 31 July competing in really bad conditions, with pouring rain and low temperatures.

“I want to thank everyone for the support whilst I was competing at the Commonwealth Games. I had the most overwhelming, but incredible time. To have competed at the Games in my home country was amazing but, to me, what was even better was going round the stadium and seeing people I knew. So thank you to everyone that took the time to come and cheer me and Scotland on. Also to everyone that tuned in and watched on television, thank you. I am so glad to have the support; it makes me feel confident that I can go far in this sport with everyone behind me. A big thank you goes to my whole family and my coach, without them I wouldn’t be where I am today. I hope that I can carry on doing everyone proud.

“I was also very pleased to make my debut for Great Britain at the European Championships in August and so lucky to have so many experiences this year. I was just as overwhelmed to pull on a GB vest as I was to pull on a Scotland vest. It all makes me feel very proud of myself and what I have achieved when I am selected for these incredible experiences. But I wouldn’t have made it without the amazing support from my family and friends.”

STOP PRESS •• Fantastic news .... as Newsline went to press Sammi had just won two gold medals (100m and 400m T53) at the IPC Athletics European Championships in Swansea. Well done Sammi! •• •
Some facts about Sammi

Interesting fact about yourself?
When I was 3, I lambed my first sheep.

If you could live through any year in history, what year and why?
1989 because that was the year that the first Paralympics was founded. I would have loved to be part of the moment when disabilities were started to be seen in a different light.

Career Highlights:
2014 European Championships, Swansea
2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2014
2013 Scottish Athletics Senior Championships, 200m - 1st
2013 Great Scottish Run, 10000m - 1st
2013 Swiss National Junior Championships, 100m - 3rd
2012 Virgin Mini Marathon, Marathon - 2nd

Sammi is now aiming to compete in the Paralympic Games in Rio in 2016.
Sammi is a vivacious, upbeat character and looks forward to making the most of her chances – but she admits that lying on a hospital bed four years ago, none of this seemed possible. “I suppose I was lucky in that when the accident happened, I was 14 and completely naïve. But I knew straightaway I was never going to walk again. I remember the last feeling, every single muscle in my legs tensing, my toes curling, a release and that was it.

“I was like, what now? In the hospital, while Mum and Dad were talking to the doctors, I thought I was going to be in that bed forever.

“I didn’t think there was going to be a wheelchair. I went to the Spinal Unit Games where you can try different sports. The second last day was athletics. I was like, what are they going to do, make us run?

“Then I saw a girl in a wheelchair training. I couldn’t believe how fast she was going and I loved the smart kit. Someone said to me, you’ve got brilliant shape for this. To be told I could be good at something again was just amazing.”

Queens Baton Relay

“It was with immense pride and amazing honour to carry the Queens Baton in Shawlands, Glasgow. The turn out and support was incredible and totally overwhelming,” said Angie Malone.

Angie Malone is Britain’s most decorated curler. She has represented Scotland at six World Championships winning Gold twice, Silver and Bronze. She has also represented Great Britain at three Paralympic Games, winning Silver in Turin and most recently returning from Sochi this year with Bronze.

Angie was spinally injured as a result of a road traffic accident when she was 16. She has two daughters Ashley and Lara and has been involved in many sports.

In 2008, 17 months before the Paralympic Games in Vancouver, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Days before her double mastectomy operation she skipped her team to victory in the British Championships. This serious illness, two operations and intensive chemotherapy treatment only served to make Angie more determined. Determination with dedicated training that ensured she reached her goal of 2010 Paralympic selection.

Apart from being a British Paralympian and World Champion Wheelchair Curler, Angie is an inspirational speaker, accredited coach and Patron of Ayrshire Sportsability, a charity that through sport supports and inspires young people with a disability.

She is currently training towards the 2015 World Championships in Finland under the leadership of Head Coach Tony Zummack.
Getting away from it all can be a great way of building confidence following a spinal injury. Everyone needs a break and a change of scenery now and again, and a chance to spend time with friends or family can be the highlight of the year. Arranging an accessible holiday can seem like a daunting task if you don’t know where to look, but you might be surprised at what is available for people with spinal injuries – and the Disabled Holiday Directory is here to help.

The Disabled Holiday Directory is the UK’s leading specialist travel agent and tour operator for people with disabilities or limited mobility. The world should be as accessible as possible, and there is a large choice of accessible holidays both in the UK and abroad.

Most of the holiday accommodation has features such as grab rails, widened doorways, wet rooms and shower chairs as standard, whilst some even feature tracking hoists and electric beds. If you need some extras, the hire and delivery of mobility equipment can be arranged and be waiting for you at your accommodation when you arrive – including wheelchairs, beds and hoists.

Care and supported holidays can also be offered to many destinations. Travel insurance for people with pre-existing conditions can also be sorted out, so you can book knowing you’re fully covered should something go wrong.

The range of accessible holidays in the UK include self catering and catered accommodation, luxury hotels, barn conversions, picture postcard cottages, caravans, hotels and even accommodation with accessible pools and hot tubs.

For those wanting to go further afield, there are thousands of holidays throughout Europe and beyond, from accessible villas in the sun to African safaris. Holidays in Spain are a great choice, with some beaches featuring boarded walkways and amphibious wheelchairs so you can bask on the sand.

Cruises are popular, and are a great way of going abroad if flights aren’t for you. Fully accessible cabins are large, with en-suite wet rooms and shower seats as standard, whilst even large equipment such as electric beds and hoists can be hired and taken on board.

A high customer satisfaction rate of 97% demonstrates the pride and care the experienced team provides to customers at Disabled Holiday Directory. Clients can discuss their individual needs so everything is tailored for the best holiday possible. The service is recognised within the travel industry, having just won the prestigious ‘Outstanding Agent of the Year’ award at the Travel Brit Awards 2014.

www.disabledholidaydirectory.co.uk
Tel: 0800 993 0796
Mohammed Sohail is a Glaswegian who was living in Dubai when he was involved in a road traffic accident which caused fracture to his cervical spine at C4, C5 and C6 level, compression to his spinal cord and quadriplegia to his limbs.

Before his accident, Mohammed had a very busy and successful career within the construction/real estate industry and had been involved in the development of various landmark projects both in the UK and internationally. In Dubai, Mohammed worked for a large construction and property group and, as Development Director for its Property Division, he had a very active and demanding schedule.

When he eventually regained consciousness following the road traffic accident, Mohammed was heavily drugged and on a tracheostomy ventilator. With his wife, both sets of parents, and his best friend from Glasgow flown in to be at his bedside, realisation that his situation was serious quickly kicked in.

Mohammed had initial surgery in Dubai to install metal fixation to his front neck fracture before being transported back to the Southern General Spinal Unit in Glasgow for further rehabilitation and treatment.

Upon arriving at the Spinal Unit, the Doctors examined his MRI scans only to establish that the rear neck fractures had yet to be addressed for which another operation took place to insert metal fixation and bolts to the rear neck to fix the fractures at C4, C5 and C6 level.

Mohammed told Newsline: “I am not aware of my accident as I do not remember anything, however, I do recall waking up in the Dubai hospital thinking why are my parents in Dubai, why are my friends and work colleagues constantly visiting me and why am I not in the office. My wife was told that due to the level of my spinal injury I would never walk again or regain much movement or power in my limbs that were paralysed. I became more aware of my injury in the Glasgow Spinal Unit and the extent of my problems; paralysis in my limbs which made me realise that my life will never be the same again. From being a totally independent, fit and active person, I was now totally paralysed, bed ridden and unable to move, communicate or speak with anyone.

“It was an extremely emotional day when I was discharged from the Spinal Unit. I have huge respect for the staff.”

“I feel huge relief and thanks that I have recovered to a far greater level than expected”. 
“This was devastating news but all spinal injuries are different and everyone’s bodies react and recover in different ways. Thanks to the skill of wonderful Spinal Unit staff, my belief in God, prayers of my family and friends, and my self-determination, I am now able to walk again. It was an extremely emotional day when I was discharged from the Spinal Unit. I have huge respect for the staff.”

When we spoke to Mohammed in July it was during the month of Ramadan during which Muslims fast and, although he was finding it hard to go without food during the fasting hours, it is important to him that he tries to re-establish as much normality back into his life.

“I am strong minded and a traditionalist and find it hard that I cannot do everything as I used to do. I was very active, enjoyed jogging and gym fitness. This experience has made me realise that I should make more time for my two young children, aged four and one, and my wife of eight years Shabina. Such incidents and trauma situations put everything into perspective and makes one look at life in a different way.”

Mohammed has every intention of returning to work and hopes to share this experience in a future issue of Newsline. Meanwhile, he is treasuring each day with his family in Glasgow and trying to give his body and mind the time required to rehabilitate from last year’s accident.

“I do have bad days and need to learn to talk more about my feelings. I face physical and mental challenges on a daily basis which are unknown to other people because physically they look at me as normal and able bodied. My time with a counsellor is helping with this. It is difficult to accept things like the weakness in my upper limbs and hands as it restricts and hinders what I can do, for example I am unable to pray on my knees in the mosque due to spasms and pain in the legs. But there is a gradual realisation that not everyone is looking at me or judging me. And, of course, I feel huge relief and thanks that I have recovered to a far greater level than expected.

“I have learnt to look at the positives in the negatives and try to remain focused and optimistic. I have visited some of the other patients that I spent time with in the Spinal Unit and I understand the challenges that they are facing. It is incredibly difficult to stay positive, but the right attitude can make a difference to recovery. I really believe that.”
There are many problems that can arise to prevent someone returning to work after an accident. But with the right help and advice, many of these problems can be overcome.

In this issue of Newsline we feature a case study looking at Simon Walton and the situation he was in when looking at getting back to work. Simon initially met an SIS representative at the Spinal Unit and was quickly referred to the Access to Work scheme.

**Simon’s Story**

Simon (37) is a self-employed agricultural contractor. He has a wide range of contracts for a number of customers. Simon works on different farms year round and carries out a range of tasks, such as moving silage from a harvester forager to a pit in the summer. Then in the winter he might do slurry work and any other similar tasks that require a tractor and competent and experienced operator.

Born in Carlisle, Simon has worked on a farm all his life and is now based in the Dumfries area. However in May 2012 he had an accident whilst riding a quad bike. He was catapulted off the bike, leaving him with a broken back and he is now in a wheelchair.

Simon has no use of his lower limbs, cannot stand and has no sensation in his legs. He is unable to drive a normal vehicle as he cannot use his feet to apply brakes.

Simon applied to Access to Work for support to help him get back to work. He explained to his advisor that he needed support to get in and out of the tractor and be able to safely use the vehicle and apply the brakes as required.

In discussion with the advisor they looked at the possibility of having a lift and adaptations fitted to his tractor so he could get in and out of the vehicle.

**Access to Work** paid for hand controls and lift adaptations to be fitted into his tractor. This enables Simon to get in and out of the tractor cab easily. The lift raises Simon to the height of the cab and then he slides across into the cab. The wheelchair is stored on the tractor so he can get down again. Simon also needs hand controls to operate the brakes.

Putting this support in place has allowed Simon to return to work and to pick up some new contracts.

“The initial process involved quite a lot of toing and froing, but once I had all the necessary information pulled together it was relatively straightforward. So far this year I have been pretty busy with ploughing work and drilling so I am optimistic about the rest of the year,” commented Simon.

[www.gov.uk/access-to-work](http://www.gov.uk/access-to-work)
The shadow of the long extinct volcano Arthur’s Seat is an apt setting for a venue offering a potted history of the planet. At Our Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh, complex and varied scientific subjects are explained with ease and enthusiasm.

Beginning with the Big Bang, children and adults alike can witness the creation of the Earth, follow the planet through its evolution and even catch glimpses of its future.

With clever use of video and sound, the descent in the ‘time machine’ (in reality, a highly accessible lift) transports visitors backwards from the present day, through the history of time, to the formation of the universe. At the end of the short journey, the doors of the time machine open out onto the bridge of a spaceship where huge screens display Hubble Telescope images of the Big Bang. And from that point – going forward through time – the story of the creation of our Earth and continents is told via a series of vivid and spectacular 3D, 4D and tactile exhibits.

In Restless Earth, the floor shudders with the colossal force of an earthquake and the icebergs in Polar Extremes are authentically chilly to touch. On the Incredible Adventure expedition, you’ll be guided by a CGI pilot on a flight from the Arctic to the tropical rainforest – it is such a realistic experience that you’ll even feel g-force and sense your stomach roll during turbulence.

Earlier this year, a new experience was launched, Scotland’s Time Lords, Our Dynamic Earth’s biggest ever redevelopment. The journey begins as oak panelled doors open on a classroom where the ghost of James Hutton demonstrates his theories on how the Earth was formed, moves on to a gallery with a giant illuminated globe showing the effect of plate tectonics, and continues with a brand new Deep Time Machine. The experience includes brand new footage created in collaboration with Our Dynamic Earth and the National Space Centre Creative which offers the chance to witness the development of the universe from the Big Bang through to early Earth. Each gallery is completely different and ranges from interactive exhibits to the impression of travelling through time.

The underground car park has numerous disabled bays and lift access to the entrance level. Wheelchair users and their friends and family are able to stay together throughout – seeing and touching all the exhibits from the same angles. Complimentary audio guides and induction loops are available. This is an inclusive, multi-sensory, seamless experience – a triumph of accessibility.

Accessibility

Fully wheelchair accessible, ramp access to the entrance and lifts throughout, to navigate through the exhibition. There are disabled toilet facilities on both sides of the building.

www.dynamicearth.co.uk
Holyrood Road, Edinburgh EH8 8AS
Tel: 0131 5507800

Opening hours:
April–Oct 10am–5.30pm; Nov–Mar Wed–Sun
10am–5.30pm; July & Aug 10am–6pm
(last entry 90 mins before closing)

Entry:
Adults £12.50, Child (3-15) £7.95, Concession £10.50
Q. I was seriously injured in an accident about one year ago. I was sitting in my car which was parked next to a pavement. My wife was in the butcher’s shop and I was sitting in the car waiting for her to come back. All of a sudden, a car just crashed right into my parked car. It just seemed to come from nowhere. I was so badly injured that I was not able to speak to the driver after the accident. I was taken away to hospital in an ambulance. I have thought about making a claim for compensation, but I have heard locally that the driver had taken a hypoglycaemic (or diabetic) attack while driving and he cannot remember anything about the accident. Apparently, he had driven for two miles before his car hit mine! I suppose it was not the man’s fault that he had driving while driving. Would compensation be paid if the man was unwell while driving? Would his car crashing into mine?

David, Kirkcaldy

A. From what you say, yes, you are likely to succeed with a claim for compensation. The court would apply a test to determine whether the man was ‘driving’ at the time of the accident. The court would consider whether the man was in conscious control of the vehicle and whether his movements were voluntary. A number of cases like this have gone before the courts in the past, where the driver has pleaded a defence of ‘automatism’. This expression in law means a complete loss of consciousness. For a defence of automatism to succeed, there must be a total destruction of voluntary control on the part of the driver. Impaired, reduced or partial control is not enough for the defence to succeed. If the court finds that there has been some degree of control during the journey of the car, a defence of automatism is unlikely to succeed. That means that compensation will have to be paid to you.

Tommy, East Kilbride

Q. My step-daughter is learning how to drive and she asked me to take her out in my car for a lesson. I organised the insurance. I had taken her out for a few lessons. However, on our last lesson, she stopped at a junction and was about to turn right. She let the clutch out too quickly and didn’t have enough time to straighten up. She crashed into a bus stop. I was injured as a result of the accident. I wondered if I would be entitled to compensation when I was supposed to be in charge of her. Will the insurance company say that it was my own fault as I did not manage to straighten the steering wheel for her?

A. I doubt the insurance company could escape liability by placing the whole blame on you for the accident. The driver, whether learner or qualified, owes a duty of care to all persons on the road, whether drivers or passengers in vehicles, pedestrians or otherwise. The driver owes that same duty of care to the instructor. However, an instructor may be found to have contributed to the accident if he or she has not been quick enough to correct errors. This is called contributory negligence. If the instructor has been found to have contributed to the accident by not reacting quickly enough, the court will make a percentage deduction from the award of damages to reflect the extent to which the instructor contributed to the accident. In previous cases involving learner drivers, the court has found that an instructor and learner driver are jointly concerned in driving a car and they must maintain the same level of control over the car as an experienced and skilful driver.

Stevie, Forfar

Q. I was cycling on a bike trail a few months ago. Next to the bike trail, there was a burn. I could see a trail on the other side of the burn and decided to ride my mountain bike across the burn to get to that part of the trail. The burn looked pretty shallow but, about half way across, the bed of the burn dipped quite a bit and the water turned deeper. I lost my balance and fell on to rocks. I hurt myself badly. I have complained to the owners of the bike trail. I think they should put a fence up or at least warn people about the depth of the burn to prevent an accident like this happening again. The owners have told me that they do not have to put anything up. So, I have told them I am going to sue them. They told me to go ahead because, in their view, I don’t have a leg to stand on. Should the owners have fenced off that part of the burn or put warning signs up?

A. The Occupiers’ Liability (Scotland) Act 1960 places a duty on owners and those who have control over land to show reasonable care for persons entering on to their land. The duty of care to be shown to a person entering onto the land or premises is to take reasonable care to see that the person does not suffer injury. What is reasonable will depend on the circumstances of each case. The burn is likely to be considered a ‘natural hazard’. There is fairly consistent authority from the Scottish courts that a land owner need not take steps to fence off natural hazards such as rivers and cliffs. In a Scottish case in 2007, the court confirmed that the general law remained as stated in back in 1908 – that an occupier of land containing natural phenomena such as rivers and cliffs which present obvious dangers are not required to take precautions against persons becoming injured by reasons of those dangers unless there are special risks such as unusual sources of danger. I do expect that a court would consider the river to be a permanent, ordinary and familiar feature of the landscape which does not need to be fenced off. The depth of burns and rivers change and the change in depth would be seen to be a normal feature which one would expect to find when attempting to cross the water.
Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
This is a new benefit for adults of working age with long-term health problems or disabilities that need help getting around or with ‘daily living activities’. It has now replaced Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for people aged 16 to 64. DWP will gradually move people with DLA over to the new PIP.

Who can get a PIP?
You can get PIP if you:
• are aged 16 to 64 and satisfy the residence conditions
• satisfy the daily living or mobility test. You must have needed help for at least three months before and nine months after your claim unless you are terminally ill - then you can get help straight away.
You can receive PIP whether you are in or out of work. Whether you can get PIP and how much you get is based on your ability to carry out a range of daily living or mobility activities.

Help with daily living activities
This assessment looks at your ability to undertake the following ‘daily living activities’:
• preparing food and taking nutrition
• managing therapy or monitoring a health condition
• washing and bathing
• managing toilet needs or incontinence
• dressing and undressing
• verbal communication
• reading and understanding signs, symbols and words
• engaging with others
• making budgeting decisions

Help with mobility activities
This assessment is based on your ability to plan and follow a journey and looks at how you move around. You should qualify for the mobility component if your ability to undertake ‘mobility activities’ is limited or severely limited.
Activities have points values and you need to score a certain number of points to qualify for PIP.

How to claim PIP
You need to contact the DWP by telephone to register. If you cannot make a claim over the phone, a friend or family member can contact the DWP for you but you need to be there too as the DWP may want you to authorise the person phoning for you.

A claim form needs to provide information about your disability or health problem. It is important to give as much information as you can about how your disability affects you so that you give the DWP a clear picture of how you manage day to day. If you use aids or adaptations, a walking stick, shower seat or adapted cutlery for example, make sure you provide information about this as you can score points in the assessment if you use an aid or appliance.
First time claimants will also have to attend a face-to-face medical assessment to get PIP.

How much PIP will I get?
The daily living and mobility components are both paid at two rates – standard or enhanced. If your claim is successful, you may get just one component or both components.
PIP awards will be reviewed more regularly than DLA claims were.

Effect of PIP on other benefits
Like DLA, you can get PIP even if no one is giving you the help you need and you live alone. It is not taxable and is paid on top of any other money, benefits, pensions and savings you already have.
Getting PIP may mean that your other benefits increase. Get advice for further information.

When will existing DLA claimants be affected?
Most existing DLA claimants won’t be affected until October 2015, when they will start to be invited to claim PIP and be reassessed. The DWP expects to have contacted everyone by 2018.
From 28 October 2013, people living in some areas of the UK who were getting DLA began to be reassessed for PIP if they were in one of the following groups:
• people who report a change in their condition
• people whose award is due to end on or after 17 March 2014
• young people who reach age 16 on after 7 October 2013

Further information and advice from: www.gov.uk

Jacqueline Lange
Welfare Rights Adviser
Digby Brown Solicitors
Thank you to Claire Johnston who ran the Edinburgh 10k in May on behalf of SIS. Claire said: “My first 10k was a great experience and I had a lot of fun, the atmosphere was great. It was a grey day but soon forgotten once I got going. For those who are interested in times, I completed it in 1:11:34 which I was pretty chuffed with. (I was overtaken by three fancy dress donkeys at the beginning which made my heart sink but I galloped after them!). I have raised a fantastic £801 for Spinal Injuries Scotland which is brilliant. For those of you who want to take up a challenge - just do it!”

Thank you to the Rutherglen West and Wardlawhill Church Women’s Meeting for their donation of £50.

Thank you to Elizabeth Henderson and everyone involved with the David Henderson Appeal Fund for the donation of £500 and for the kind words in appreciation of the work done by SIS.

Sincere thanks to Drummond Miller Solicitors who has nominated Spinal Injuries Scotland as one of its supported charities and for the regular donations that it sends us.

Many thanks to Team Begbie, members of Sweatshop Running Community Edinburgh. A member of the team’s son, Adam Begbie (20), broke his neck in an accident last summer and spent five months in the Spinal Unit in Glasgow. The team has supported the family and they chose to run in the Edinburgh Marathon Festival races to raise money for Spinal Injuries Scotland in recognition of the support Adam has received, and to support others in similar situations. Adam said: “The team’s total amount raised is £4,320.25. I am so proud of all of the runners, they all did fantastically well”.

Thanks to all of those who have been fundraising in the past few months. Here are just a few stories about these efforts and we cannot thank you enough.
Many thanks to St Andrew’s Scottish Episcopal Church, Milngavie for the donation of £100.

A huge thank you goes to Alister Robertson and the charity committee from Kelso High School in the Scottish Borders for raising £1000 for SIS.

The money was raised by having coffee mornings for the teachers and at parents’ nights, as well as two raffles. Laura Torrance went to the school to collect the cheque and Alister told her that a few people close to him had sustained a spinal cord injury and he was told the Peer Support team at SIS was supporting them through the many months in the Glasgow Spinal Unit. Alister felt that this was something close to his heart and a worthwhile cause.

Thank you to Joanne Mitchell who ran the Edinburgh Half Marathon and raised £326.50. Joanne said: “I chose to run for the Spinal Injuries Scotland charity as it is close to mine and the girls’ hearts. They helped us all through a dreadful period in our life and without them it would have made our journey harder – I want to give back to them.”

Thank you to Emma Morrison who raised £317.50 running her first Edinburgh Half Marathon in May. SIS is a cause which is very close to her heart due to her father having had a spinal injury for 21 years, and her employment taking her to the Spinal Unit and to a centre for spinal and brain injuries in Aberdeen.

Many thanks to the Lynda Turner School of Dancing for the donation of £625 raised at their recent dancing displays. We are very grateful to Lynda and the girls for their continued support.

Thanks to Joe Denning who raised £376.25 running the Edinburgh Marathon. He wanted to run for SIS due to the help his mother received when she was in the Spinal Unit.

Kerry Hird ran the Mull of Kintyre Half Marathon. “My reason for choosing SIS is that my brother sustained a spinal injury when he was 20, running into the sea and diving into the water, and has been a wheelchair user for nearly 30 years now. I really wanted to help raise money for SIS as they do so much for so many. For me it is a way of giving something back and helping make a difference. The Mull of Kintyre Half Marathon is a tough run, 13.1 miles of beautiful countryside with the first five miles uphill, then two miles over a golf course and a gorgeous sandy beach, then the last six miles relatively flat. I was one of the last to finish but I did it and I will do it again but faster!” Kerry raised £856.25, and requested that the money be put towards Clober Farm. This will enable us to buy some much needed equipment – thank you Kerry.
Many thanks to Bruce Lambert and some of his family and friends who entered this year’s Tough Mudder at Dalkeith and raised over £500. They chose SIS as one of the team’s relatives suffered a spinal injury whilst working in his tractor on a farm. Bruce said: “We all managed to complete the course; it was a hard but great day with lots of mud and a few aches and pains.”

Sergeant Mike Muir and Corporal Colin ‘Minty’ Murray of RAF Lossiemouth are taking on the gruelling Mongol Rally in aid of SIS. They decided to raise money for SIS when a colleague’s wife sustained a spinal injury – she is currently receiving treatment in the Spinal Unit.

The Mongol Rally starts and ends in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia some 30 days later. It is 10,000 miles of pure adrenaline filled action, covering one third of the surface of the Earth.

Squadron Leader Walter Sutherland, the adjutant for 2622 Squadron, explained: “This life changing adventure will take our intrepid heroes through 17 countries, over mountains, deserts and some of the most remote, challenging terrain on the planet. There are no rules in the Mongol Rally, no set route, no assistance on the road, and no way to make the 11,000 mile journey in an ill-suited 1.2 Daewoo Kalos without encountering problems.”

As well as the Rally, Mike and Minty have also been involved in several other fundraising activities including a raffle and collections at local supermarkets, and we are extremely grateful for their efforts.

There will be a full report on Mike and Minty’s adventure in the next edition of Newsline.
Christmas Card Order Form 2014

All cards sold complete with envelopes in packs of 10, unless otherwise stated. Please fill in your name, address and daytime telephone number and indicate your card selection on the order form.

If anyone would like SIS to provide a personalised message we can arrange for overprinted labels with your specific details/message. Please contact the office for more information.

Please return the completed form to:
SPINAL INJURIES SCOTLAND, 150 BRAND STREET, GLASGOW G51 1DH
Tel: 0141 427 7686

This year’s Christmas cards come in packs of 10, and they cost £3.50 per pack.

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Postage and Packing

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Please include a contact telephone number should we have any queries about your order.

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Please make cheques payable to ‘Spinal Injuries Scotland’

CARD DETAILS (Please tick appropriate box)

I wish to pay by:

Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Delta ☐ Maestro ☐

I authorise you to debit my account with the purchase on this form.

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Security code: ........................................................

Signature of cardholder .........................................................................

Please contact Rosemarie Boyle at the office to place your order over the phone or email rosemarie.boyle@sisonline.org to place your order by email.
HOLIDAY PROPERTY FOR SALE

LAKE DISTRICT, WINDERMERE
Timber lodge in a 4-star park on the shores of Lake Windermere. 40ft x 20ft timber clad throughout. Includes all fixtures and fittings, including furniture, bed linen and beds etc. 42 years left to run on lease. Hire income usually pays the ground rent. Sleeps four in comfort, fully wheelchair accessible, wet room and family bathroom. View at www.timber-lodge.co.uk
Email: info@gossonline.co.uk
Tel: 01423 323 123

PROPERTY FOR SALE IN BRITTANY, FRANCE
Two renovated wheelchair accessible cottages for sale with heated pool and pool hoist. One large 3/4 bed and one slightly smaller 3 bed, both with ground floor bedrooms and en-suite wet rooms. Good size garden with ramped access. Rural location, private and secluded. One hour from ferry and airport, 30mins from the coast. For more details go to www.property-for-sale-inbrittany.co.uk

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HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

FRANCE

MAYENNE
18th century stone property with four bedrooms and a three-acre private lake for fishing. Wheelchair accessible, with ground-floor bedroom and en-suite wet room. www.francefishingholiday.co.uk or telephone Darren C6/7 on 01405 816 750

COLLIoure, SOUTH OF FRANCE
Ground-floor, two bedroom apartment, sleeps four/six. Level access throughout. Designed specifically for people with spinal cord injury. En-suite bathrooms, air-conditioning, full heating. Height-adjustable beds, pressure-relieving mattresses. Separate upstairs apartment available for family or friends.
www.origincare.co.uk click on L’Origine or call Nathalie on 00 33 632 56 61 75

PROVENCE
Detached single-storey villa adapted for wheelchair user. Owner T3 paraplegic. Private gardens, pool and secure parking. Sleeps four in two bedrooms. One with wheel-in wet room, shower and shower chair, the other with bath and shower. 10 minute walk from the shops at Lorgues and a 45-minute drive from the coast.
www.accessvilladelorgues.co.uk
Contact Geoffrey Croasdale Tel: 01753 850 564. Email: g.croasdale@btopenworld.com

SPAIN

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Discover beautiful unspoilt Andalucía. Stylish accommodation offering the very highest level of accessibility. Wheelchair accessible transfers & transport. Mobility aids and care available.

LAS PIEDRAS RURAL HOTEL, in a stunning mountain setting, heated pool with hoist or

EL PLEAMAR APARTMENT, right on the Mediterranean, pool with hoist.
Contact Hannah or Adrian for a brochure or information. Tel: 029 212 54321. Email info@lapiedras.co.uk www.laspiedras.co.uk

ALCOSSEBRE
Superior, front line two bedroom apartment with en-suite level access shower. Modern low rise complex, beautifully kept gardens, swimming pools. Large terrace overlooking beach. Wheelchair accessible throughout. Level access to bars and restaurants. Secure parking.
Email: tedbid@aol.com Tel: 01228 561 219

JAVEA, COSTA BLANCA
Spacious, fully-equipped, luxury, five-bedroom villa, sleeps 10. Three bathrooms (two en-suite, one with roll-in shower). Flat plot, fully accessible gardens. 12m x 6m pool with hoist. Sky TV. 2.5km to beach. Vehicle required. Contact John Kenny 07721 336 747. enquiries@casadefloresspain.co.uk www.casadefloresspain.co.uk
HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

SPAIN

JAVEA, COSTA BLANCA
Lovely wheelchair friendly villa set in large colourful gardens on level, gated plot. Well equipped, three beds, two baths, master bed with large en-suite bathroom and wheel-in shower (chair provided). Cable TV with Sky and English channels, DVD player plus DVD library, free broadband internet access. Wheelchair-friendly gardens, 10m x 5m pool with easy-to-use water-powered pool lift and full-size outdoor table tennis table. T1 paraplegic owner. Contact Norman or Sue. Tel: 01900 67280 Mobile: 07818 406 861. Email: info@accessvillaspain.com.
www.accessvillaspain.com

TORREVIEJA, COSTA BLANCA
www.disabledvilla.com

PORTUGAL

ALGARVE
Your home from home in the sun including accessible transport and airport transfers. Owned by C4 tetraplegic, 20 minutes from Faro airport with stunning views and privacy. 3 twin bedrooms, 2 with wheel-in showers. Pool with hoist heated to 25ºC. Inclusive accessible vans & airport transfers, electric up and down bed, electric indoor hoist, shower/commode chairs etc. Not to be missed. See full details on our comprehensive website. Tel. 00351 289 414 687. E-mail: sia@ouricodomar.com
www.ouricodomar.com

ALGARVE
Spacious private villa with pool and hoist. Three bed, two bath with wheel-in shower. Shower chair provided. Well-equipped kitchen. Two barbecues. All doors one-metre wide. Level access throughout villa and pool area. Paraplegic owner. Debbie Wells. Tel: 01277 354 313

ALAMANCIL, ALGARVE
Outstanding, fully-accessible luxury private villa set in beautiful countryside. Three bedrooms, all en-suite with wheel-in showers. Private pool with hoist. Comfortable lounge/dining rooms and well-equipped kitchen. All you could wish for in a holiday home and so much more! To contact us call 01530 833 690 or www.villas-algarve.co.uk

CYPRUS

POLIS
Three-bed accessible bungalow/villa. Private pool with wide steps and handrails. Ramp access throughout villa and grounds. Walking/pushing distance from shops, village and beach (with beach buggy/wheelchair available in summer holidays). Wheel-in wet room with wall-mounted shower seat. Self-propelling shower chair available. Accessible hob and sink in kitchen. Owned and designed by SCI person. Call Emily on 01451 822041 or Email: olive_1977@hotmail.com

FLORIDA

ORLANDO
Luxury, four bedroom, four bathroom villa with its own private pool, set in a small and exclusive private gated community, close to all amenities. Very spacious, level access throughout and fully wheelchair accessible. The rear of the villa backs onto fields and is not overlooked. Wheel-in shower, pool, hoist etc. All facilities and 24-hour management company. Disney only 10 minutes, brochure from Roger Whittle. Tel: 01242 573 233 or visit www.accessiblefloridavillas.com

ORANGE TREE, ORLANDO
Five bed/four bath, purpose-built wheelchair accessible villa overlooking lake and conservation area. Level access throughout, Wheel-in shower and shower chair. Non-chlorine x-large pool with spa, both accessible by hoist. Free Wi-Fi, sleeps 12, short drive to attractions and amenities. Paraplegic owner. www.ayersfloridavillas.com Email: lucy@ayersfloridavillas.com

SELF CATERING ACCOMMODATION

ENGLAND

ABNEY, DERBYSHIRE
Room for all Seasons, fully adapted, luxury, self-catering property in the heart of the Peak District National Park. Wheelchair accessible, hoist available. Sleeps three. www.laneendfarmtrust.co.uk Tel: Viv for leaflet or more information 01433 650 043

CORNWALL, TWO-BED ACCESSIBLE BUNGALOW
Close to Portreath Beach and Tehidy Woods. Owned by C8/T12 Tetra. Master bedroom with en-suite wet room plus twin-bedded room, family bathroom, fitted kitchen and Wi-Fi. Open all year. To book visit www.cornishholiday.com or Tel: 01527 837 683
**Holiday Classifieds** from SIA’s forward magazine

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### SELF CATERING ACCOMMODATION

#### ENGLAND

**DISABLED HOLIDAYS AT HOME**
C4/5 quadriplegic owner. I have spent years looking for accessible holidays without the price tag. So, I did them myself! I have adapted chalets in England, close to beach and dog-friendly. Mablethorpe, Tunstall near Withernsea (open 11 months). Both with wet rooms. Shower chair, electric beds and manual hoist provided. Please visit website for more details [www.disabledapartment.com](http://www.disabledapartment.com) Email: darrenpj@rocketmail.com. Catch me on Facebook or telephone Darren on 0751 554 1300

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**LAKE DISTRICT, WINDERMERE**
Fully adapted, self-catering lodge situated in a 4-star park. Two twin bedrooms, one with en-suite bathroom. Fully fitted kitchen TV/DVD, central heating, free Wi-Fi. Site shop, bar, restaurant, swimming pool with hoist. Play area. View [www.timber-lodge.co.uk](http://www.timber-lodge.co.uk) and follow booking link or Email: info@gossonline.co.uk Open March until early January 2015.

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**TODSWORTHY FARM HOLIDAYS CORNWALL**
18th Century Cornish stone and slate cottages on a working farm fully adapted for wheelchair users and their families. Superb rural location. Set in an area of outstanding natural beauty. Two cottages, both three bedrooms, sleeping up to six. Perfect for touring Devon and Cornwall. Open all year. Tel: 01822 834 744 [www.todsworthyfarmholidays.co.uk](http://www.todsworthyfarmholidays.co.uk)

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**TREWORGANS FARM HOLIDAYS, MID CORNWALL**
Newly converted barns (sleep four & six) that are wheelchair accessible. All bedrooms have en-suite facilities – each property has one level-access wet room. Adapted kitchens. Accessible decked patio areas. Detached. Ample parking areas. Four-section electric profiling bed, air mattress and 160kg electric hoists available. Rise/recline chairs. Care available from local agency. Exposed beams, wood burner. Ideal location for exploring the whole county. Tel: 01726 883 240 or 07762 173 860. [www.treworgansfarm.co.uk](http://www.treworgansfarm.co.uk)

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**CHRISTCHURCH, DORSET**
Self-catering bungalow, sleeps up to six. Ceiling hoists in bedroom and bathroom, wheel-in shower, clos-o-mat loo, low-level kitchen. Contact 01202 481 597 Email: info@31aha.co.uk. [www.31aha.co.uk](http://www.31aha.co.uk)

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### PENROSE BURDEN, CORNWALL
Fully adapted cottages for wheelchair users and their families. Superb rural area with outstanding views. Open all year round. Wood burning stoves. Colour brochure. Please write or ring Nancy Hall, Penrose Burden, St Breward, Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 4LZ. Tel: 01208 850 277 or 01208 850 617. [www.penroseburden.co.uk](http://www.penroseburden.co.uk)

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### RATCLIFFE DISABLED HOLIDAYS

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### SELF CATERING ACCOMMODATION

#### SCOTLAND

**CLOBER FARM, MILNGAVIE, GLASGOW**
Spinal Injuries Scotland was bequeathed this Grade C-listed property and has converted it to fully accessible accommodation, with extensive gardens, situated around 30 minutes from Glasgow city centre. The accommodation sleeps five/six and comprises adaptable kitchen, two double bedrooms, one with en-suite wet-room, a single bedroom, plus a modern accessible bathroom. For further information, see the SIS website [www.sisonline.org](http://www.sisonline.org) Email: clober.farm@sisonline.org Tel: 0141 427 7686 / 0800 0132 305

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**BRENFIELD CROFT COTTAGES, ARDRISHAIG, ARGYLL**
Luxury 4-star cottage with decking and beautiful sea views. Offering four bedrooms, 2 on the ground floor, wet room and large lounge/dining room. Close to the Crinan Canal and the fishing village of Tarbert. An ideal location to explore Argyll. Tel: 01546 603284. Email: info@croft-cottages.co.uk. [www.croft-cottages.co.uk](http://www.croft-cottages.co.uk)
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