

# One Voice

NMC Physio Client Newsletter  
Summer 2006 - Edition 4

## NMC STAFF NEWS

The NMC has recently welcomed two new drivers. Paul Drinkwater has joined as a "permanent" driver / member of staff. Paul, who lives in Northwich, has two young boys and felt that his role with the NMC would also allow him to continue to spend time with his family. Paul has been kind enough to bring his "DIY" skills with him and has already worked through many jobs on the NMC's "To Do" list. Thank you Paul for all your efforts!



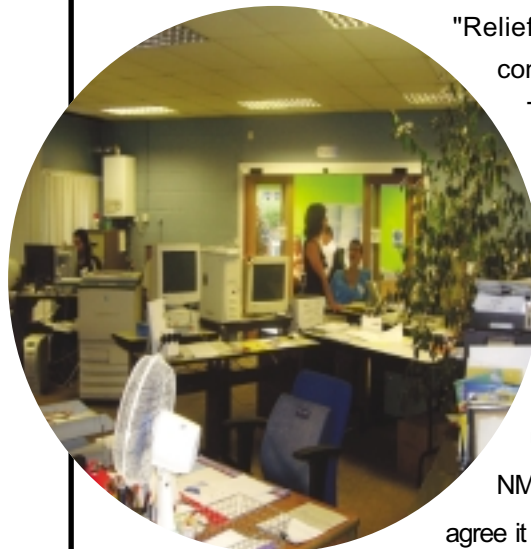
Paul Donald, (this gets complicated as three out of our four drivers are called Paul) joined the NMC Team as our "Relief driver". This has enabled us to offer continuity to the transport service for The NMC. Thank you Paul for joining our team.

## NMC BUILDING WORK - COMPLETION

Thank you one and all for your patience and understanding during the building work at The NMC. The work is now completed and I'm sure you'll agree it was worth it! The Design and Training areas look modern and upbeat, are even more accessible and take NMC Design and Training into a new and exciting era. The inaugural opening of the new training suite took place at The NMC Open Day on July 6th by Anne Hooker, in memory of her late husband Roy.

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## PROTECTING YOUR BLUE BADGE

With over 6000 Blue badges stolen from parked cars in 2004 there is an increasing need to protect your badge. Furthermore, the loss of a Blue Badge means that you can be faced with a six week waiting time for a replacement badge and during that time owners are compromised whenever they need to park their cars. The Blue Badge Protector is a simple visible deterrent, providing effective security for all badge holders. Available from Gowrings Mobility on 0845 608 8020 or visit [www.gowringsmobility.co.uk](http://www.gowringsmobility.co.uk)

## RAMP FOR THE ROAD

The Flexiloc Ramp Kit - Weekend Plus can fit into the boot of a car and can be used to make a variety of ramps of different shapes and sizes. The kit consists of polyurethane tiles that interlock together. The weekend kit also contains a pair of telescopic ramps. Available from Gowrings Mobility, prices from £35. Tel: 0845 608 8020 or visit [www.gowringsmobility.co.uk](http://www.gowringsmobility.co.uk)

## CARERS UPDATE

☆ CARERS WEEK. As you may have seen in the press and at The NMC, the second week of June was Carers Week. Carers Week promoted to the wider community, the real and valued role that carers play in society. During the week there were various events held across the UK to encourage carers to take time out for themselves. The Carers Notice Board at The NMC aims to keep you updated with events taking place locally and nationally, and give general information that could help make carers lives' easier. If you are a Carer and have any useful information that you wish to share then please do let me know.

☆ CARERS QUALIFICATION. You have the skills, why not get the qualification that recognises the skills you have acquired along the way? LEARNING for LIVING is the new personal development course for unpaid carers. Comments from some people who have attended the course. ... It's brilliant, it gives you a lot of confidence This one gives you a qualification that you can actually use in the workplace Instead of actually looking after everyone else, I've realised that I need looking after too . Find out more at [www.learningforliving.co.uk](http://www.learningforliving.co.uk)

## PHYSIO TEAM UPDATE

### Staff

The physio team have recently been supplemented by physiotherapy students from Manchester University. They have worked at the NMC as part of their training programme, providing them with clinical experience. Rosie is looking forward to welcoming more students in early 2007.

### Cough Assist Update

Permission has now been sought from Consultants of the selected clients to trial the cough assist machine. At the time of going to press Cough Assist will have been trialled on several clients.

### Cough Assist Machine - Mike Jackson

Although it is called a Cough Assist, it doesn't really make you cough lots but it does most of the work for you.

If you have used a ventilator it won't be too hard to get used to, as it blows air in a similar way. However, it sucks air back out again which is a strange sensation. It has a face mask which covers your nose and mouth and it is held tight on the face by you or your carer, a physio or if you're lucky, a sexy nurse!

At first, one should practice a couple of times everyday to familiarise yourself with the machine, even if you do not feel it necessary. When you do have a cold or chest infection it is not the best time to start learning how to use it.

It is best to try to use it at least once a week and increase usage when required ie: as soon as you feel something in your throat or chest.

I have used it in anger a couple of times! With regular use it definitely helped keep the colds off my chest and shifted phlegm and catarrh, keeping my airways clear.

I wouldn't use it as the only method; I also use a nebulizer. The cough assist machine is much more pleasant than the suction stamps and you don't require so much beating . mind you I'm sure the physios enjoy beating me!

## HYDROTHERAPY AT HEBDEN GREEN SCHOOL

### What does hydrotherapy mean to you?

I posed the question to several physio clients who regularly attend hydrotherapy at Hebden. Here are their responses:-

- ... Hydrotherapy offers relaxation and stress relief.
- ... It's good for aches and pains and general mobility.
- ... The warmth of the water warms my whole body.
- .. I can do so much in the water that I would be unable to do on land.
- ... I have made so much progress in the last 8 months.
- ... It's good to feel that there are still things you can do.
- ... It's only when you've not been to hydrotherapy for a while that you realise its benefits.

For those of you who use The Hydrotherapy Pool, sessions have finished for the summer but will recommence in September.

## PROPOSED NMC COMPLEMENTARY TREATMENT DAY

Thank you to all of you who have completed and returned the questionnaires regarding the proposed NMC Complementary Therapy Day. Your feedback has been invaluable. The responses so far have been very favourable indeed and indicated that there is definitely a need for such an event. I am continuing to analyse the data and organise the practicalities of such an event. Watch this space! For those of you who have not returned your questionnaires but would still like to do so, it is not too late! Thank you.

## PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

### OUR NMC WEDDING BELLE



On Saturday 27th May, 2006, Karen Rush an NMC Design Team member and physio client, married Alan Pritchard. Karen kindly offered to share her wedding experience. . . . .

When we first booked our wedding venue, the hotel was not fully accessible, but we were advised that alterations were to be made, and a booking would mean they then had a day to get things done by. They even agreed to convert a lounge to a downstairs bedroom for the weekend. We placed our trust in them and booked!

Throughout the lead up to the wedding we were asked for our advice on the adaptations, which made us feel confident that all would be well. Actually seeing the bathroom being built settled our nerves but there were still no ramps in sight. After we made enquiries we were assured that the ramps would be there on the day.

I stayed at the hotel the night before and didn't foresee a problem. It felt like home from home! I settled myself and looked forward to my big day. Nerves played their part, and after a sleepless night the day was here. Despite the nerves, my beautician made me feel a million dollars and even dressed my wheelchair in ivory and gold.

As I arrived, I heard his laugh a mile away and realised all was well. Our day went without a hitch. All the guests arrived on time, the speeches went well and the best man embarrassed us both, all in good faith!

The day became evening and it was time to let our hair down and party. We were both so happy to see so many faces with big smiles enjoying the music and party. I plucked up the courage and surprised Alan, and announced our first dance (which by now I had to clear the dance floor!). Unfortunately, the ramps came back to haunt us, as I found out when I got stuck! They were too short and the incline was steep. However, luckily, friends and family were on hand to help out. Although the hotel converted a function room into a bedroom for us, unfortunately it was next to the laundry room, so it was a little noisy.

All the staff treated us with respect and understanding and went out of their way to accommodate the needs of all the guests. Our day was everything we hoped for and more!

For our honeymoon we chose a cruise and sailed with P&O aboard the OCEANA, and spent 14 days and nights exploring the Mediterranean coast,

Life aboard was excellent and accessibility throughout the ship was good. Unfortunately although the ship had been recently refitted and the carpets looked very smart they proved to be of a very deep pile so it was difficult to push my wheelchair. Also the doors out onto the sea decks were heavy and ramped (to act against wind and water/rain) but passengers and crew were only too willing to help. The main draw back was that there was no pool hoist but on reflection I didn't like the thought of being the centre of attention anyway! I felt comfortable on board as I knew that if I got stuck someone would help me, particularly when I left Alan to his last drink or two, I would head off to the room and the waiter/porter would help me to the cabin.

The draw back on excursions was that if the ship could not dock and tenders were required to get to shore, then only the more able-bodied could manage the gang ladder down to sea level. At all ports we docked at, a ramped gangway was set and to Alan's surprise only the crew are able to assist you, health & safety and all that! Interestingly, we found out that if you travel by coach and you express an interest in a particular destination, then they would pre book accessible transport be it taxi, mini bus, coach for you. However, you are not under any obligation to go on the trip. At two of our cruise destinations, accessible transport was booked. It's worth doing this but do remember to book early as places get taken up rather quickly. You can however do your own thing and travel by taxi or train but do remember to be back on time!

I think we have found a holiday that suits us, but we will try the AURORA next as it's rumoured to be slightly better equipped, with push buttons to open doors on to the decks. Despite the setbacks it is a holiday that I would recommend. We cruised with P & O and can only comment on our experiences and that of fellow passengers. We would do it all over again, in a few years to come.....

Karen Pritchard

# BUYING A SCOOTER

With so many different sizes and types of scooters to choose from it is important that you choose one that best fits your needs, budget and lifestyle. It is also worth speaking to family and/or friends who may use a scooter as they have first hand experience and that is invaluable.

The following guidelines should help.

Which model should you buy?

There are many different sizes of scooters to choose from, from the three wheeled machines to the very much larger four wheeled scooters. It really does depend upon where you want to use the scooter and for what purpose. Do you just want to use it to pop to the shops or is it mainly for hikes in the countryside? If it is the former then a small lightweight scooter would suffice but if the latter then a larger, more powerful scooter would be more appropriate. Furthermore, if you live in a hilly area then you will also need a more powerful scooter. Generally speaking the smaller the model the less powerful it will be.

Sometimes, buying the right model might have to be a compromise. You might want the power and range of a larger model but you might also want to take the scooter away with you at weekends and holidays.

**Weight of the scooter.** The weight of a scooter varies from model to model. There are some models which are "reasonably light" for example the "Buddy". However the more off road/rough terrain scooters are much heavier.

**Weight of the chair.** A titanium or aluminium frame is lightweight and strong but likely to be more costly than a steel-framed chair.

**Accessible Controls.** Some scooters allow you to move the control panel towards you for maximum comfort.

**Armrests/ Headrests.** Armrests are generally moveable allowing easy access on and off the scooter. When upright they sit at a ninety degree angle. Headrests are available on several models.

**Footrests and Armrests.** Footrests and arm rests can be fixed or moveable. With special modification it is possible to have electrically retractable footrests.

**Aesthetics.** Aesthetic features are important too. There's lots of choice in terms of design and colour so you can personalise your scooter and express your personality. Remember that you can still have street cred in your scooter.

**Battery.** Keeping your battery charged is something that you need to take into account before you decide to buy. The way in which you look after the batteries determines the length of their useful life. You need to think about where your battery will be stored and charged. The power point needs to be within easy reach to plug in your charger. Charging your scooter is generally best done overnight. Most have lights on the control panel to indicate when the battery is running low. It is advisable to find where you can buy new batteries and how much a new pair of batteries would cost if and when you need to replace them. A battery that is easier to lift off the scooter will make folding it much easier.

**Transporting your scooter.** You need to consider the space in your vehicle and the ease of folding / loading the scooter. The scooter, in its entirety, or as separate parts should be able to put in the car.

**Try Before You Buy.** It is essential that you try a selection of scooters before you buy and choose one that best suits your needs.

**Talk to Other Scooter Users.** They have lots of knowledge and practical experience about the good and bad points about the scooters they use now and those they may have used in the past. It is best to get as much advice and information as possible.

**User Independence.** Scooters offer you real independence and freedom. You are "in control" of where you want to go.

**Cost versus features.** You can purchase a scooter for just under £500, particularly if you shop at sale times, but equally you can spend thousands. Costs vary according to the scooter type and features. Generally the more features, the higher the cost. It might be worth considering purchasing an ex demo model or second hand model. However, when purchasing a second hand model you will need to make sure that it satisfies your needs.

**Average / Rough Terrain Scooters.** Will you use the chair primarily around town and on fairly flat surfaces? Are you more likely to want to use it on rough terrain? This will dictate the size of the chair, the strength of the motor and the cost.

**User Independence.** Scooters offer you real independence and freedom. You are "in control" of where you want to go.

**Where Can You Buy a Scooter ?** It is advisable to buy a scooter from a reputable, BHTA approved (British Healthcare Trade Association) and experienced retailer, and one that can look after you in years to come. Motability, for example is a well-known company with great expertise in this field. Other Scooter companies are always advertised in many "Disabled Magazines", National and Local Newspapers. Personal recommendations include:

- ☆ MobilityByDezine - contact Tom Deas Tel: 01877 330563 visit [www.mobilitybydezine.co.uk](http://www.mobilitybydezine.co.uk)
- ☆ TGA Tel: 0800 107 5349 visit [www.tga-electric.com](http://www.tga-electric.com)
- ☆ Chester Mobility Centre, 18, Knutsford Way, Sealand Industrial Estate Tel: 01244 377363
- ☆ Motability Tel: 0845 456 4566 visit [www.motability.co.uk](http://www.motability.co.uk)

Some scooters can only be driven safely on the footpaths whilst others are designed that they can be driven safely on the road. You would need to refer to the high way code for road safety pointers. It is also advisable to have your scooter serviced annually to keep it in good condition. It will also help with resale value.

### How do I pay for a scooter?

Possible sources of funding include:-

- ☆ Via Motability. Tel: 0845 456 4566 or visit [www.motability.co.uk](http://www.motability.co.uk)
- ☆ Through Charities, Rotary Clubs, Golf Clubs. These organisations welcome the opportunity to fund such purchases.

### Insurance.

It is advisable to obtain insurance for your scooter and to get a few quotes to compare prices.

- \* FISH Insurance offer special extra cover with lower premiums. For further info visit [www.fishinsurance.co.uk](http://www.fishinsurance.co.uk) or Tel: 0500 4321 41
- \* First Senior Insurance Services Ltd. Tel: 01582 840067 or visit [www.firstsenior.com](http://www.firstsenior.com)

### VAT Exemption

Most disabled people are exempt from paying VAT on items and equipment that will improve their quality of life.

However, you will need to complete a VAT Exemption form (Notice 701/7) available from HM Customs Tel 0845 010 9000.

### In summary, things to remember before you buy.

- ☆ Talk to other scooter users.
- ☆ Try before you buy. Take advantage of scooter hire at such places like zoos, garden centres and shop mobility to really get a feel for a scooter. This will help you decide what features you really need.
- ☆ Negotiate on price.
- ☆ Insurance. Obtain several quotes.
- ☆ Is the scooter mainly for pavement/town use or more rough terrain? This will help you decide what type of scooter you need.
- ☆ Consider the weight of the scooter.
- ☆ Cost versus features.
- ☆ Transporting your scooter.
- ☆ Shop around to get the best deal.

### Further Information

- ☆ [www.muscular dystrophy.org/caresupport/equipmentandwheelchairs.html](http://www.muscular dystrophy.org/caresupport/equipmentandwheelchairs.html)
- ☆ For contact details of major manufacturers and dealers call: The Disabled Living Foundation Helpline: 0845 130 9177 or log onto: [www.dlf.org.uk](http://www.dlf.org.uk)

### Personal Experience of Buying and Using A Scooter - Andrea Duckworth, Editor One Voice.

*I had been thinking of buying a scooter for some while. I am unable to ride a bike, so I felt increasingly isolated from certain family activities that were important to me.*

*Before I chose my scooter, I rang around several companies. Various company representatives came to my house where I was able to test drive different models. I considered the options of buying both an ex demonstration model and a brand new model. After much negotiation I opted for a brand new model as the company I chose offered me the best deal. The company was independent and did not favour one company or another. There was no pressure to buy and they genuinely wanted to sell me the scooter that best suited my needs. Furthermore, I managed to obtain a further discount as there was a supply problem with the colour that I had ordered. The company owner transported my scooter from Scotland on a grim Saturday in February (in adverse weather conditions!) and there was no delivery charge. Buying the scooter has given me a new lease of life and sense of freedom. I have been out on bike rides with my children around our village, visited Chester Zoo, taken my daughter to Rainbows and my son to Cubs. I'm looking forward to taking it to North Wales one day - I'll be able to whizz along that wonderful stretch in Llandudno! Although my scooter is lightweight, it is not really meant for grass, doesn't like wet conditions or going up hills. I need an off roader for that! That's next on my list but I need to start saving the pennies!*

*Sometimes, it is hard to give in to your body's increasing frailty but it need not be the end of the world. Suddenly you have a new lease of life. Remember, as one door closes, another opens...*

## ROTARY DISTRICT 1180 DISABLED GAMES

The annual disabled games are back, and this really is a date for your diary. It's a great opportunity to try a new sport and all levels of ability are welcomed. There will be lots to choose from including; new age curling, boccia, bowls, table tennis, wheelchair basketball, and tennis. The date, Sunday 17th September, 2006, at MBNA Offices, Chester Business Park, Chester. Entry is free and there are medals and T-shirts for all competitors. For further information and entry forms please contact David Towers Tel: 01691772230. An opportunity not to be missed!

## TRIED AND TESTED HOLIDAYS/ DAYS OUT - PERSONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Craithie Opportunity Holidays.**

A great holiday opportunity on Royal Deeside for everyone, with superb facilities for disabled people. The Old Manse Courtyard in Craithie, on the banks of the River Dee and overlooking Balmoral estate. Four fully accessible self-catering cottages. If you are lucky you may even get a glimpse of Her Majesty The Queen! A wonderful place. **Dan Cundall**

### **Kingfisher Barn Cottages, Abingdon-on-Thames, Oxford**

We enjoyed ourselves very much indeed at Kingfisher Barn Cottages, we found it very relaxing and so peaceful too. As for the cottage itself, which was called 'Stable Cottage' we couldn't have asked for more, it was very spacious with plenty of space to move around in my chair. There were hoists in the bedrooms and bathroom, which made life so much easier. With all the extra comforts it was really like home from home. The staff at Kingfisher were friendly too and very helpful indeed. This was our second visit!  
**Liza Grzadzielewska**

A super cottage and very disabled-friendly. Good accessibility. Pure relaxation - an oasis!  
**Andrea Duckworth**

### **Wirral Community Narrow Boat Trust**

Enjoy a relaxing day out or short break with a difference. The Wirral Community and Narrow Boat Trust operate two specially built narrow boats, fully equipped to take groups on day trips or longer breaks on the inland waterways. Managed by a fully trained crew, with full cooking facilities, toilets, central heating and fully adapted for disabled people. For further details and availability, telephone 0151 357 1783. Please note that the boats can hold a maximum of three powered wheelchairs and approx up to 7 manual wheelchairs.

### **BRITAIN'S ACCESSIBLE PLACES TO STAY**

This book is now available for reference at The NMC.

**For further details on these holidays and days out please refer to the YELLOW BOX files on display at the NMC.**

### **THE JOSEPH PATRICK TRUST**

The Joseph Patrick Trust is a grant giving trust that provides financial support to empower people with muscular dystrophy or a related muscle disease. It was set up in 1986 by J Alexander Patrick in memory of his father Joseph Patrick, who was a founder member of The Muscular Dystrophy Campaign. The Joseph Patrick Trust gives support towards the cost of specialist equipment such as powered wheelchairs, specially adapted computers, electric beds and riser chairs, enabling people to remain independent and continue with education or employment.

Who can apply? Anyone with muscular dystrophy or a related neuromuscular condition.

For applications, guidelines or further information please contact:  
Joseph Patrick Trust, Natrass House, 7-11 Prescott Place, London, SW4 6BS. Tel: 020 7720 8055 e.mail: info@muscular-dystrophy.org  
Web: www.muscular-dystrophy.org

### **GRIFFITHS COURT**

A Centre that has recently been set up to support disabled people and carers with respite, residential and nursing care. In addition the centre will offer complimentary therapeutic services, facilities for social integration and promote independent living. Located in Warrington and available to disabled people and their families throughout the North West. For further information please contact The Warrington Disability Partnership, Centre for Independent Living, Beaufort Street, Warrington, WA1 4QL.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

A Night with Ted Robbins -  
30th September 2006

For one night only Ted will be your host at Warrington's Parr Hall. Prepare yourself for the unique opportunity to see Ted with his stand up routine which is entertainment at its very best.

Linedance Extravaganza - 6th  
October 2006

Grab your Stetsons and join us at Winsford Civic hall to dance the night away to live music by renowned linedance band Magill. Tickets are priced at £6.50 and £4.00 for concessions.

Ladies Lunch Event - 12th  
October 2006

We return to The Bridge Hotel, Prestbury where we will enjoy a two course lunch. After lunch Meg Fearn will enchant with tales from her travels throughout India and how it inspired her to launch a business selling textiles and jewellery produced by the people she met along the way. Tickets priced at £15.

AFTERNOON TEA BECKONS  
... with Mrs Dale's  
wonderful Carrot Cake.

### Moist Carrot Cake

9oz (250g) wholemeal Flour  
6oz (175g) raw sugar  
(muscovado or Barbados)  
6oz (175g) soft brown sugar  
3 x size 3 eggs  
6fl oz (175ml) sunflower oil  
2fl oz (55ml) soured cream  
2 teaspoons pure vanilla  
essence  
approx 1 tsp freshly-grated  
nutmeg  
2 level tsp cinnamon  
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda  
11oz (300g) grated carrots  
3oz (75g) desiccated coconut

### For the topping

4oz (110g) full fat soft cheese  
2oz (50g) unsalted butter  
2oz (50g) sifted icing sugar  
Juice of 1/2 a lemon

Pre-heat the oven to gas  
mark 2, 300F (150C)

Grease an 8inch (20cm)  
round cake tin (lined with  
greaseproof paper) and two  
mixing bowls.

Place the eggs, oil, vanilla  
essence and soured cream in  
one mixing bowl and sieve the  
sugars into it. In the other  
bowl sift the flour, nutmeg,  
cinnamon and soda.

Beat the wet ingredients and  
sugars together then fold in  
the dry ingredients, followed  
by the carrots and coconut.  
Mix well to distribute  
everything evenly, then spoon  
into the cake tin and bake on  
the centre shelf for 1 1/2 - 2  
hours.

When the cake is cool, mix  
the topping ingredients  
together and spread evenly  
over the top.

Best eaten after a couple of  
days - if you can wait that  
long!

## GARY LITTLE'S OUTDOOR CHALLENGE



*When I first had a look at going on the course with the Prince's Trust, I thought that I wasn't going to be able to do this. I really didn't feel very confident about it at all as I don't get out very much.*

*During the course I did a lot of team building tasks which were really good. Everyone was friendly and we all worked well together. I did have a problem getting on to the bus that was taking us around to different places but a lad called Tommy would lift me on and that made me feel safe.*

*During the first week when we were on residential in Wales I did archery, abseiling and team building games. One night we played a game where we had to write something good about each person in the team. It was interesting to see other peoples comments about me. .funny, respectful, determined and willing to give it a go! We did a fund raise first to make the money for our Community Project. During the 20 days I did several things including decorate two games rooms at a children's home for the Community Project.*

*By the end of the course my confidence improved a great deal. I felt part of something. I also think that the team felt they had achieved something by helping me. The logbook work was a pain at times because I don't think I am very good at writing and thinking about what I need to put down. However, Laura & Lisa, the Team Leaders were always on hand to help and stretch you that little bit more.*

*The last day was the Final Presentation.*

*Although this was a good experience, I was very nervous and worried that I would be unable to get my point across. Furthermore, my Dad was in the audience! Once I had completed my speech, people came over to me and told me it was good, so that boosted my confidence. There is much more to tell about all the things I enjoyed and I could be here all day. I will stop now though!*



TURN YOUR UNWANTED ITEMS INTO CASH AND HELP RAISE FUNDS FOR THE NMC.

### **THE NMC IS ON THE HUNT...**

- ☆ **Unwanted Gifts ?**
- ☆ **Broken Jewellery ?**
- ☆ **Unwanted Mobile Phones ?**
- ☆ **Second Hand Books ?**
- ☆ **Any Used Stamps and Postcards?**
- ☆ **Empty Jam Jars ?**

**If you have any of the above items and would like to dispose of them, then please come and see our Fundraising Team.**

**Some supporters of the NMC sell these items (the jars are filled with delicious jams and chutneys) on behalf of the charity. Thank you very much for your help. The Fundraising Team.**

FINALLY . ...

Enjoy the summer and try something new. You may be pleasantly surprised!

FORTHCOMING EDITION

Next issue Autumn/Winter 2006 to include ..... adapting your home (so you don't feel isolated), life with a ventilator, free insulation.....

...UNTIL NEXT TIME...

Please keep your ideas and suggestions coming in. Your contributions really matter. Just drop me a line, by post to the NMC, telephone 01606 861733 or e.mail [andrea@nmccentre.com](mailto:andrea@nmccentre.com)

**shop for less and support**



### **NMC WEBSHOP**

Our webshop [www.buy.at/nmc](http://www.buy.at/nmc) has been a great success for the Centre. So far it has earned us £528 in commission. Please pass on the details to your friends and family. Remember, the more you shop the more we earn! Thank you.

Designed and produced by NMC Design, Woodford Lane West, Winsford, Cheshire, CW7 4EH.

### **FROM THE EDITOR**

Summer is here at last and isn't it wonderful to be able to throw off the layers and enjoy the outdoors? The sunshine, the birds, the flowers ...The warmer weather has also helped keep my muscles warm, I hope it has done the same for you too.

The past few months have been quite busy. Although my legs are becoming increasingly weaker and I am falling much more, I recently bought a scooter which has given me a new lease of life. Now I am able to join in on bike rides with my husband and children, even if I'm not feeling particularly energetic. It's easily transportable and in theory, light enough to lift in to the car. Unfortunately I am not strong enough to do that on my own so I need to have somebody with me. Buying the scooter has really boosted my confidence, and given me some freedom. It's my new pair of legs. I'd like an off roader now!

During the May half-term I went on a four day break to Oxfordshire with the children. We had a super cottage which was very geared up for those of us with mobility difficulties. A walk-in shower, height adjustable kitchen, the use of hoists and it was all on one level. The weather was perfect and that really made a difference. I would highly recommend the accommodation. For further details see "Tried and Tested" later in this newsletter.

As a carer of a child with special needs I was fortunate, as part of Carers Week to be invited to a day on the canal. On the one hand I was very much looking forward to it, but on the other, very apprehensive about how I was going to get on board. We met at The Cheshire Cat pub in Chester where 11 others and I boarded Rainbow's End .....and it was so easy. We just walked on to the boat, stood on this special area which then lowered us to the seating area. What was I worried about? Captained by two volunteers, we departed just after 10am where we enjoyed coffee and croissants as we ambled downstream. We saw some spectacular scenery, ducks and ducklings, herons and butterflies. After lunch at The Shady Oak pub, we embarked once more for a leisurely trip back to The Cheshire Cat. More chatter, coffee and muffins as well as breathtaking scenery. Pure relaxation! What a super way to spend a day, away from the hustle and bustle of life. Although my trip was paid for by The Carers Centre, you too could enjoy this trip with your family and friends. For further information please refer to "Tried and Tested" in this edition.

Wishing you all an enjoyable summer, whether you remain at home or go on holiday. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition. Please keep your articles coming in, and if you see me at The NMC please come and say hello. I won't bite! **Andrea**