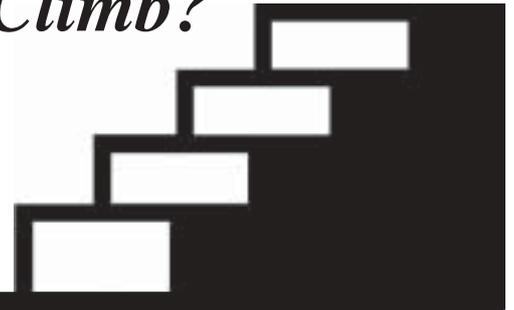




Disability Equality...

Still a Mountain to Climb?



This time last year ICOD and many other interested parties took part in an exercise to assist the Council in preparing its Disability Equality Duty in time for 4th December 2006.

It's now that time of year again when all public bodies such as the Health Board, Police Etc. need to review progress made on their Disability Equality Schemes.

The Council will be meeting with ICOD soon to discuss developments

and it is good to see that it is intended that the venue will be suitable for all.

This unfortunately has not been the case when members have attended other public events, presentations and consultations.

There is still a general lack of awareness of the need to provide auxiliary aids such as hearing loops, copies of large print documents and sign language interpreters.

This anticipatory duty was

placed upon all service providers and was part of the original DDA 1995 it's now 2007.

By at least getting these basic things right we will go a long way to ensuring that disabled people are always included.



***A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
to all our readers!***



**Remember to send your letter to Santa in
Large Print, Audio Tape and Braille!**



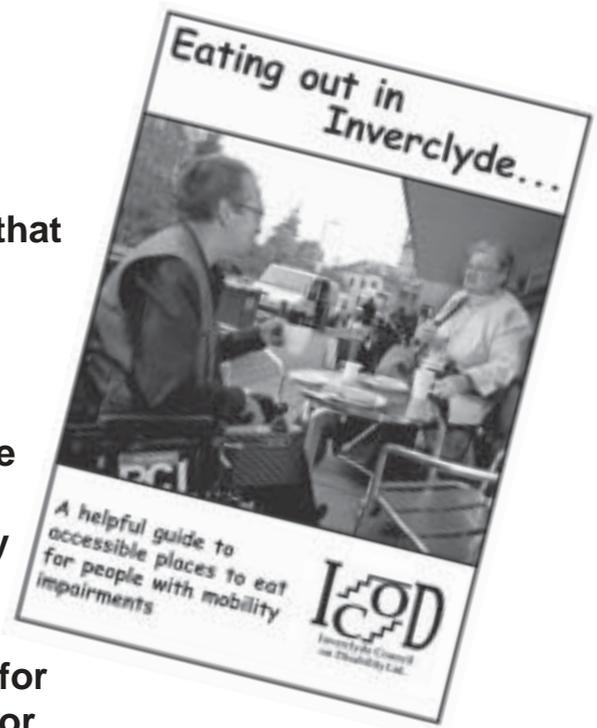
Eating out for all...

ICOD's Accessible Eateries Guide was launched on Friday 2nd November at Café 1-18. Councillor Ian Mackenzie, Ian Fraser, Director of Education and Social Care and representatives of the Inverclyde Tourist group joined ICOD directors Kathy McDade and Gordon Hendry at the launch.

Since its publication ICOD has received several enquiries from establishments wishing to be evaluated with a view to inclusion on the guide at our website at www.icod.org.uk

Kathy said, "It's great that **other eateries are wishing to be recognised and publicised and that some who didn't quite make have asked for advice as to how they could.**

The guide is not just for disabled people but for everyone and we hope that eventually all eateries will strive towards becoming accessible A big thanks is due to staff and fellow directors who were involved in the compilation of the document."



ICOD is following up this guide with a view to compiling another of accessible toilet facilities in the area and any information that you can offer on this subject will be welcome. Please contact the office on 01475 732700.

International Day of Disabled People 2007

Monday the 3rd of December marked the United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons. To mark the event, ICOD teamed up with Inverclyde Libraries, Lead Scotland and the Adult Literacies team to highlight the accessible learning opportunities available through the ABC (Access for Beginners to Computing) project.

A display showing equipment and accessible software available through the project was on show at the Central Library, and staff were on hand to answer any questions about the project.

You can contact Dianne Gallacher, ABC Support Worker by telephone on 01475 712330 or by email: dianne.gallacher@inverclyde.gov.uk

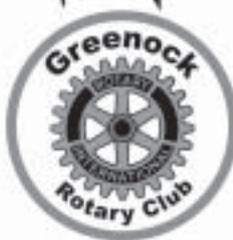


Kathy McDade and Dianne Gallacher with Lindsey Kimmond and Linda Barker, two of the learners who are participating in the project

Seasons Greetings...



A Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year
to all our members,
service users
and supporters



Inverclyde
council



Please see the back page for our
Christmas and New Year Opening Hours



Contributing to our communities...

...answer the 400-500 enquiries we receive each year

"The scooter rambles are wonderful, I've been places I haven't visited for years, and made new friends too"

...raise awareness of disability issues with 700 P7 children in our schools and 100 members of the voluntary sector each year

"You would be my first point of call when I need help and advice"

...train 15-20 people each year in British Sign Language

...consult ICOD members on disability issues and fulfil obligations under the Disability Equality Duty, new schools build, recruitment, retention and planning issues

"ICOD is contributing to the regeneration of Inverclyde"

...provide mobility equipment at all kinds of community events - (QE2 visit, Pipe Band Championships, History walks etc).

We may lose the opportunity to...



...provide 15,000 hours of independence and respite for mobility equipment users and their carers each year

"Your assistance with my benefits claim was invaluable"

...assist the Roads Dept in the mapping and planning of Dropped Kerbs in our communities

"I love having the independence to go where and when I want"

...engage disabled people on access issues for the community

...ensure 80+ people a year enjoy our inclusive rambles

...recover the £100,000+ that our Shopmobility members spend each year in our town centre



...ensure the voices of the 15%+ of our population which have a long-term illness or disability have their voices heard



ICOD, and other organisations funded through the Community Regeneration Fund (due to finish in March 2008) are currently under threat. These are the organisations working in our communities, run by local people. If you are concerned

about the possible loss of these much needed services you can help in a number of ways:

- Contact organisations directly to offer them your support
- Express your concerns to:
Your MSPs and MP
Your Local Councillors

If you are unsure who your MSPs, MP or Councillors are please contact the ICOD office on:

Tel: 01475 732700

Minicom: 01475 732995

email:
enquiries@icod.org.uk

Congratulations to Jessie and Donnie, Equality Champions!

As founder members of ICOD Ltd. Jessie Duncan and Donnie Buchanan were nominated for The Inverclyde Council Equality Awards Scheme and were duly recognised for their dedication and hard work, over the past 20 years.

The Provost recognised their valuable contribution in making Inverclyde a more accessible and inclusive Community. Jessie and Donnie are a fine example of the voluntary community spirit that exists within Inverclyde.

They have presided over ICOD and have



Jessie and Donnie, outside the ICOD Offices

seen it grow from a home-based organisation to an accessible town centre front line service with a range of facilities to assist the disabled in our community.

Moving up...

It is said that the best days of your life are spent at school and no one knows that better than Robert Watkins a first year pupil at Gourock High and a wheel chair user.

“I wasn’t sure if I would be able to go with my friends to the High School when we finished primary, but thanks to some adaptations the Council made I have arrived and am enjoying things very much.

It’s really important to have your friends round about you when such big changes take place, but I have made lots of new friends too. The teachers

are really good (but don’t tell them I said so) and I think I am coping well with my new subjects, which I find really interesting.

Getting about the school has been made easier with the use of a stair-climbing machine, which gets me up and down to my various classes and Mrs Cameron and the rest of the Learning Support team, who help me are really great. School’s just brilliant!

I think it is important for disabled kids to go to their local schools and I just hope that everyone will get the same chance as me”.



Mrs Buntain , Acting Head Teacher at Gourock High said “Robert is an absolute joy to have in the school. He does a full ten subjects and due to the alterations in the school he is able to get about using a stair climber.

He is always cheerful and friendly and has endeared himself to pupils and staff alike”.

Introducing...

Kathy McDade was elected to take on the chairmanship of ICOD Ltd at our AGM in August. We thought you might like to know a little bit more about her.

Kathy was born in the east end of London and worked for a while with the Borough of Hackney as a disabilities officer until she was forced to retire due to ill health.

She came to Scotland in the 90's and settled in Greenock with her husband Andy, a native Inverclyder. Kathy was looking forward to a quiet life in Inverclyde, how wrong can she be?

Q. Why did you take on the role of chair of ICOD?

A. I felt I could make a difference having had a background on disability rights issues.

Q. What is the best part of your role?

A. Making a positive contribution to the disabled community and hopefully influencing the decision makers.

Q. What's the most difficult part of your role?

A. Sometimes it's like banging your head of a brick wall trying to get people to change their attitudes. Many people still don't recognise the contribution that disabled make in our community.

Q. What do you do in your spare time?

A. What spare time!?

Q. Who do you admire most?

A. People like the Children of Courage in Inverclyde and kids that act as carers.



Kathy McDade, our new Chairperson, Speaking at our Welfare Reform Conference last year

Q. What is your favourite food?

A. Anything cooked by someone else!

Q. What is your favourite music?

A. Anything from the sixties but mainly Tamla Mowtown.

Q. If you could have just one gift for Christmas what would it be?

A. A three bedroom Barrier-Free house.

A Lift for the Community...

After some considerable time raising concerns about accessibility, ICOD is pleased to note that a planning application for installation of a lift at the bridge over the railway line

at Inverkip has been submitted.

It is hoped that the application will receive approval and allow everyone to gain access from the proposed Hillfarm development to the village centre.



Shopmobility Update

ICOD's Social Group was out raising money at the recent Combined Christmas Charities Fair. Members gave up their Saturday afternoon to raise the grand sum of £120, which will be used to support their next social outing. Well-done to all concerned.

Shopmobility Christmas and New Year Opening Hours

Shopmobility will be open
10am-4pm Monday-Saturday
apart from on the following days:-

Christmas Eve (Monday 24th Dec) **9am-1pm**,
Christmas Day and Boxing Day **Closed**,
New Years Eve (Monday 31st Dec) **9am-1pm**,
New Years Day and 2nd January **Closed**

*Seasons Greetings
to all our members!*

Stay Safe over the festive season...

- Doctor's surgeries and some chemists may be closed for a few days, make sure you have enough medication for the festive period.
- Make sure you keep warm!
- If going away for a few days, make sure your house is secure and keep some heating on to avoid frozen pipes.

- Guard your valuables and keep them out of sight when shopping.
- Don't drink and drive, take a taxi if you are planning to drink.
- Make sure you ask all callers at your door for Identification, don't open the door unless you are satisfied they are genuine.

If you need help, you may find the following numbers helpful...

Inverclyde Council
Council Emergencies - **719999**
Social Work - **0800 811505**

Housing Providers
River Clyde Homes - **0800 0132 196**
Oak Tree Housing - **807001**

Gas Emergencies - **0800 111 999**
Scottish Power Emergencies - **0845 2727 999**

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