

vital link

Freedom for all disabled people to fulfil their God-given potential



Get to know our CEO



Holidays in 2011



The Friendly Church



Thank You Jacky!



Changing Lives in Nyeri

With a team member unable to travel due to illness, and nearly 200 pre-registered clients unable to attend distributions, it would be easy to think that November's Nyeri distribution went badly! But a combination of dedicated hard work from the team and God's grace meant that this was a very successful trip, with nearly 400 people fitted with chairs and mobility aids.

The team travelled to Kenya from the 10th to 20th of November after receiving 254 requests for mobility aids. Clients were invited by text message and, though many couldn't make it, each person attending usually brought one or two helpers, so at times the workroom was filled with the buzz of chatter, laughter and techies working. We saw 103 children up to the age of 9 – 59 of them with cerebral palsy – adapting chairs for small children can be a long (and scream-filled!) process. Our longest day on Thursday meant we worked from 8.30am till 8.30pm and saw 98 clients.

Pastor Solomon and team member Pam spoke and prayed with almost every client and family. Fifty two made first time commitments and we ran out of the Kikuya language bibles several times, with team members paying for extra copies. We also distributed 150 blankets, which were much appreciated.

Phil Green, one of the techies, wrote a daily blog which was very well received and was being read in Kenya as it was added to the TTR website! www.throughtheroof.org/category/blogs/wheelsblogs - it's a very honest and interesting look inside the work of a Wheels team.

Team leader, Glenda travelled to Nakuru on the Sunday for a recce with a view to a wheelchair distribution in 2011. She met the Mayor, addressed a meeting of over 100 representatives from disabled groups in and around Nakuru, planted a tree and visited Hill Special School. At the School there were 135 mentally and physically disabled 'children' (some as old as 35). They were in desperate need of wheelchairs and aids for their physiotherapy department. Glenda measured children (with a piece of wool and a 12" ruler) and was able to send some chairs for those in most need - a heart rending visit.

At the end of the six days of distributions, we were left with a few wheelchairs and aids and gave everything away to other hospices, hospitals, disabled centres and Hill Special School. The team was absolutely brilliant! Our supporters have helped change an incredible number of lives and families for the better.

Get to Know our CEO

Through the roof

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Our Mission

To make the Christian message accessible to all people affected by disability.

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with **Tim Wood**

We asked our Facebook followers, contacts and staff to submit a few questions for Tim in his first month as Chief Exec – here are his answers to some of those. Some longer answers, and a few more questions are up on www.throughtheroof.org.

What are Tim’s plans for TTR? I’d say that my plans are to follow God’s plans for TTR. It’s important that together we hear from God and then act on that.

What’s the charity’s role now? The DDA has passed, and everyone’s more aware of disability – what are we here to do? It’s a real privilege to take on the role and succeed the great work of Jacky. I believe that TTR is about mobilising disabled people, to release their unique gifts which will transform church and community life.

Where do you see the organisation going in the next three years? I want us to grow the reach and impact of our four programmes, so that disabled people will benefit, physically and spiritually, in greater depth and numbers. I want TTR to be associated with disabled people being visible, and actively involved in ministry and mission – manifesting what we stand for.

What strengths do you think you bring to the role? I’m passionate about my faith and disability inclusion. I’m a team builder so I love identifying the right people with the right gifts, harnessing their talents in the right role to achieve the right results altogether. I love the acronym – **Together Everyone Achieves More.**



Tim and Family

Any weaknesses? Too many to mention – ask my wife!

What’s your interest in disability? I believe God called me into the area of disability, starting at 15 as a volunteer for a ‘Disabled Children’s Holiday’ at church. That lit a passion that led me into teaching learning disabled students, 11 years with a strategic disability sports charity, and now TTR.

Tim now has his dream job as CEO of TTR, but what would his second choice dream jobbe? Growing up I admired Daley Thompson as the most supreme all-round athlete so I would love to be a Decathlete.

How do you relax? I love spending time with my wife and four wonderful children. I also enjoy running, reading and eating my wife’s home-made lasagne (but not altogether).

Any final words? Please pray that God will give me His wisdom and the courage to act, and that together we discern how the work should develop.

“Pressing On Towards The Goal” – A new season for TTR

Saturday 2nd April, Epsom; or Saturday 7th May, Burton-on-Trent 10am to 4pm

An invitation to volunteers, supporters and anyone with an interest in any aspect of the work – Wheels, DCF, Integr8, Churches Inc – to meet to be inspired, celebrate, pray and share together. Those attending will be able to...

- Celebrate our story so far
- Pray and contribute into our shared goals for the future
- Meet and mingle with other supporters, new staff and our new CEO

A light lunch will be provided. No charge will be made but a retiring offering will be open to all to contribute to the costs of the day.

Book your place now:
phone Margaret – tel: 01372 749955, e-mail: Margaret@throughtheroof.org

Aiming for Excellence

by **Mike Townsend**, Chairman



Excellence is one of Through the Roof's five values, and we aim for it in everything we do, whilst humbly learning from one another.

We try, in God's strength, to achieve a high standard of quality in all of our activities. This includes our personal relationships throughout our teams and the people we support. In Matthew 5, Jesus tells us we are salt and light. The light is a very public presentation by us of Jesus' values relating to disabled people. Salt is more hidden. We seek to permeate all that we do with Jesus – living his life in both secular and Christian spheres. What a goal! Jesus is supreme excellence.

I would like personally to thank Jacky for her excellent leadership of Through the Roof. Her personal touch and high standards have contributed much to excellence in our work. Tim is a very able successor. Pray for him as he leads us in the exciting things God has for us.



The Tenerife 2010 holiday

hibernation. The holiday will run from 21st September to 5th October, and travellers will stay in Sa Coma, Majorca.

Sa Coma is located on the eastern part of the island, 70km away from Palma and it is well known for its extensive beaches, some of the best in Majorca. The hotel has direct access to these beaches! We're looking forward to a wonderful break and time of fellowship. Full Board costs £1,120 plus excursions and care supplement, flying from Gatwick, and requires a deposit of £425.

DCF is also holding holidays in Babbacombe (30th July to 6th August), Blackpool (5th to 12th September) and Tenerife (17th to 31st May). A few spaces remain at the time of writing, and helpers are still needed – for more information on all of these holidays, ring **01372 749955**, write to **DCF, PO Box 353, Epsom KT18 5WS** or email **jenny@throughtheroof.org**.

Breaktime!

DCF Holidays in 2011

It's hardly even spring, but DCF's plans for autumn holidays are well underway. This year we'll be heading to Majorca in September to soak up as much sun as possible before winter

Connect Days

Following the success of September 2010's Connect Day, DCF will be running two similar events this year. On 4th June and 29th October from 10 for 10.30am to 4pm, all those connected with DCF are welcome to join us for a day of worship, fellowship and planning for the future. The June Connect Day will be on the theme of 'Catch the Vision' and held at the King's Church, Epsom. Everyone, whether involved with DCF now, in the past, or just exploring the possibility, is very welcome to come along. Please register by contacting us on **01372 749955**.



Discussions at the 2010 Connect Day

Hello Swansea!

We're delighted to announce that there's a new DCF Group in Swansea. If you'd like to find out more details, please contact Gill Price on **01792 406323**.

Event Prayer Diary

We've compiled an Events Diary for TTR's work throughout 2011 – it's here to help supporters who want to pray specifically for individual events or Through the Roof in general. Please get in touch if you'd like to receive a copy and join the ranks of praying folk! We are very grateful for all those who support us. Thank you!

Resolutions

by **Jenny Edwards**

As I write this the New Year is almost past, thoughts of resolutions have faded from our minds, and to many the familiar pattern of day-to-day activities has really set in. When we had all the snow I was very aware of the moans and groans of many who had to stay in simply because they could not get to work or drive the car. It occurred to me that the period of inactivity for them was and is a regular occurrence for so many, who every day of the year find it difficult getting out and end up staying at home, rarely seeing friends and simply leading very lonely lives.

Why do we find change so hard? Even a change from the regular routine throws us and turns us into irritable people. God knows we find it hard at times to accept change however small. He encourages us to 'forget the former things, do NOT dwell on the past' and in verse 4 of Isaiah 43 He reassures us that 'we are precious and honoured in his sight' and will see us through change because He loves us. So let's embrace His love and any change ahead with the confidence that He is right beside us through everything.



Fleming Fulton Experts

by **John Brown, TTR Trustee**

Have you ever had to call an expert? Our Team in N. Ireland took the opportunity when we attended the Fleming Fulton School assembly. Carol Mills, our teacher at the school, suggested we take along an old dilapidated wheelchair with many broken parts and ask a couple of wheelchair users to tell us what needed repairing and what parts were missing. This was to highlight the repair work undertaken by technical workers in our prison workshop and on distributions on a WFTW trip.

The young folk were early teenagers, but they were very quick in identifying the things which needed sorting. Footplates at different heights, flat and soft tyres, loose backrest, armrest loose and most important, faulty brakes. They're the experts!

So many people take it upon themselves to decide the needs of disabled people without asking for help from the experts whom they very kindly assist. After all we in TTR say "If in doubt - ASK!"

So many helpful people take it upon themselves to invade our space, lean on our wheelchairs, speak to those with us and so on. Ask!

It is sometimes most noticeable when dropped kerbs are not level with the road, parking spaces at our places of worship are too narrow to get the doors open and accessible toilets are used as stores. If only people would ask the experts.

I class myself as an expert. I looked it up in the dictionary. "Contains two syllables 'EX', meaning 'A HAS BEEN' and 'PERT' being 'a LARGE DRIP'" That describes me exactly!



John speaks to the experts

Joni Eareckson Tada

Dear Friends at Through the Roof...

I love all the forward-looking verbs you find in the Bible. Words like strive... reach... move out... press on... look forward, and so many more. It seems that scripture is always nudging us to focus on what's ahead with happy hearts full of anticipation! And that's the way I feel about Through the Roof...

You see, it's a fresh day of exciting beginnings here at the ministry and all of us are very pleased that Tim Wood has stepped into his new leadership role at Through the Roof. True, it'll mean a few changes. But some things will not change – and that is the commitment of Through the Roof to continue to give the hope and help of Jesus Christ to families affected by disability throughout the UK and beyond. Whether it's church training, wheelchair distributions, missions or events... you can be sure that Through the Roof will be making Jesus real among disabled people.

So join me in shoring up the efforts of TTR through your prayers and gifts – and as you do, may you experience the pleasure of God in supporting a work that is pushing back the darkness and advancing the kingdom of Christ in new fresh ways. Thank you again for all that your friendship means to Tim and the team here at Through the Roof! God's richest blessings be yours...



Ken



Gillian



Brian

Thank you Ken, Gillian & Brian

Through the Roof is deeply grateful for the work and time of all its volunteers. Many of them serve faithfully for a long time, and we couldn't do what we do without them. Recently, we've taken on a new volunteer, and two have stepped back.

Ken Fearey has worked in the office for many years. He helped Jenny with DCF admin and on many other tasks for staff. Following some of the changes in the office and staff's workloads, he will no longer be coming in regularly, but he has kindly offered to visit for occasional work. Thank you Ken for all you've done.

Gillian Russell was a member of the 'Steering Wheels' group and worked hard to raise funds and awareness for Wheels for the World in Ashted. Her hard work and skill will be missed – Thank you for all your work.

Brian Wilson is now volunteering a day a week, helping Michael with bookkeeping. Brian comes from a finance background, and approached Through the Roof looking to be able to donate some of those skills now he's retired. Welcome!

Thanks to Ken, Gillian and Brian and also the many volunteers involved in the work.

The Friendly Church



(Abridged version of original article: 'Mental Health and the Friendly Church' by Dr Rob Waller (Mind and Soul); Steve Seedall (accord); and Tim Wood, first published in accord magazine, December 2010)

Choosing a church

Imagine Dave, from Doncaster, recovering from depression. Like many people who've been ill, he's looking into the 'big questions' but doesn't know where to start. What makes a church a good one if you're struggling? Is it the fact they have a Counsellor or Depression Awareness Days? Or is it that they're aware enough to care, and moving slowly enough to deliver?

Defining friendliness

Through the Roof have been working for many years on the things that make it easy for a disabled person to come to church but have found that just because a church has a ramp or hearing loop doesn't mean that if a disabled person turns up they will receive a loving welcome. Far from being as easy to define as a tick-list of adaptations, it seems to come down to what being genuinely friendly is.

A possible definition

In the interests of keeping it simple, we wonder if the best way forward is for churches to SELF-identify against statements like the ones below. Self-identification isn't something we would check on but at least it says the leadership take this topic seriously. The list below, we think, captures the important points (but) we acknowledge that no church is perfect and have no intention to induce guilt.

- People with difficulties feel they 'belong' whether or not they are able to attend
- A contact is available for consultation who 'champions' issues around disability
- Information is available in alternative formats [e.g. large print, audio, electronic]
- Physical adjustments are willingly made to help those with different needs
- Church activities welcome, accept and are positive environments flexible to needs
- People give time sacrificially to listen and respond to pastoral issues
- The culture of the church is one of an on-going journey of valuing all, addressing needs and enabling them to use their gifts

Would you add or subtract anything from this list? Does this set the bar at the right level? Does this make sense? We want to hear your views. Mind and Soul have dedicated a section of their website to developing these concepts so people like Dave can find a church, find a true friend and find Jesus. Go to www.mindandsoul.info/mhfc to tell us your ideas, see what others are saying and sign up for updates.

Welcome

Building on the foundations that Tim has established for our Integr8 programme, we have recruited two excellent new part-time staff – Project Manager, Alan, and Youth Ambassador, Philippa to inspire a spirit of inclusion amongst the next generation. Both are committed Christians with personal experience of disability, embodying what we stand for. Check the website and next Vital Link to find out more, and please consider praying for them and making a donation to 'Integr8' to encourage them.



Big Band Night

The Stardust Big Band held a Charity Tea Concert in aid of Wheels for the World at Ruislip Manor Methodist Church on Saturday, 29th January 2011. Sales of tickets and tea raised £535 for Wheels, which is fantastic! Band Secretary, Eileen Runkel says, "It has been my wish to raise money for this worthy cause since seeing one of the DVD clips at my own church (Ruislip Baptist Church) a year or two ago. It was a successful concert. I couldn't have been more grateful to the helpers from the church and to the band." Further details of the band may be found on their website www.stardustbigband.co.uk.



Players at the Jazz Café

Christmas at the Jazz Café

In further jazz-fundraising news, £1,000 was raised for Wheels for the World at a Christmas Jazz Café, organised by Jenny and Alaisdair Wallace from the Ashted Fundraising Team. The Tim Boniface Jazz Quintet delighted an audience of 150 with an amazing selection of swing, jazz and blues at St George's Christian Centre in Ashted. Tim and the band go back a long time, three members having been school friends and played together for more than 12 years. Alaisdair, Jenny and Tim have put on this annual Jazz Café since 2001 and are pleased to commit it to 'Wheels' and spread the word. If you've organised or are organising a fundraising event (they don't have to be jazz-related), please get in touch – we'd love to hear what you're up to.

Donations



Thank you so much for all your donations and support – the work of Through the Roof would be impossible without your generosity. We aim to respond to every gift over £20, but often receive anonymous gifts, or gifts without a return address, and respond to them here: Many thanks for

these anonymous gifts... £500 through Cafcash, another £100 through Cafcash, and a further £2000, all for Wheels for the World. K Jackson's £100 donation for Wheels, P West's Charity Choice donation, L Slater's for Wheels, Lynne and Heather's gift, Peter Green's Cafcash donation and Rodney Stratford's donation.



Training and teaching at the 'Enabling Church' conference

Spreading our Message

Through the Roof is continuing to increase its impact and spread the Biblical message of disability further afield. Over the next few weeks our team will be travelling as far as the south coast, to Portsmouth, the north to Durham and as far east as Budapest. We will be leading sessions to equip youth workers and church volunteers; a sports ministry team; student ministers at St John's College; and European colleagues. If your group or church would benefit from one of our speakers or trainers – please do get in touch.

Also, we were recently involved in the 'Enabling Church' conference, and teaching sessions are now available to download as audio files at: <http://www.premier.org.uk/features/archive/enabling%20church>.



On the adventure trail at the family holiday

The Dalesdown Family Holiday

The Through the Roof Dalesdown Holiday for families with autistic children is approaching fast. The holiday will run from 12th to 15th April, and we'd really welcome your prayers for good weather, a relaxing time and a great holiday for all the families. This year, we'll be visiting the beach, going swimming, enjoying praise parties together and having altogether Too Much Fun on the adventure trail.

The holiday this year will be led by Margaret Bale, with support from Jenny Edwards and an excellent team of volunteer helpers. Each of the volunteers is contributing towards their food and accommodation, but Through the Roof is subsidising the full £95 cost. If you'd like to help us fund a one-to-one helper to work with a family, and give them a rare break together, in friendly, accepting surroundings, please get in touch. We'd love to hear from you.

In Memory of Sharon Rose Neale: 1959 – 2010

by her mother, Joyce



Sharon had a massive brain tumour when she was 30 years old. The doctors said they would operate but she could be paralysed or blind. A lot of prayer went up for Sharon, and He answered. Twelve years on, the surgeon said with that operation people rarely lived above one year. Sharon gradually deteriorated and for several years needed to use a wheelchair. She gave her heart to the Lord as a child and her faith never wavered. She loved going to Bradford DCF, and really enjoyed DCF holidays, especially in the early days at Lancaster. Our loss is heaven's gain.

Thank You Jacky!



At the 23rd February board meeting, TTR staff and board held a lunch to thank retiring CEO Jacky Oliver for her dedication and hard work. She was presented with some gift tokens, flowers, chocolate and the appreciation of all. TTR's first chairman,

Colin Reeves, sent a special video message encouraging both Jacky and Tim, and current chairman, Mike Townsend, spoke and thanked Jacky for all she'd done.



334 friends are now following us on Facebook. We'd love you to join them and add your comments... (at www.facebook.com/throughtheroof). We look forward to hearing your responses to the Vital Link, and also your thoughts and stories. We'd really like to feature short excerpts of people's own experiences, stories, maybe books or films that people have found thought-provoking, or your encouragement for others out there. Our Facebook page is a great place to share all that with others connected with Through the Roof, and if anything catches our eyes, we'll be very glad to add it to the Vital Link. Take a look!

Also, our main and youth websites – www.throughtheroof.org & <http://youth.throughtheroof.org> are regularly updated with news and details of how you can get involved in what we're doing. If you're an internet user, please remember to keep coming back. We're adding new material all the time.



Chairman Mike Townsend thanks Jacky for her years of work