

Summer activities proposed for kids

Just as this edition of Downtime was going to press, we were thrilled to read of Everton FC founder member of the Blues midfielder was a Down's Syndrome Support Group of Solihull four years ago where he is still a patron.

Carsley – whose eight-year-old son Connor was born with the condition – has devoted a lot of his spare time and efforts in raising the profile of Down syndrome, particularly in Birmingham.

We feel this will be really beneficial both for children and parents. We will be running this as a pilot scheme over the summer holidays and with your support it is our intention to make it permanent event on the Down Syndrome Liverpool calendar.

Everton star Carsley pledges support to Liverpool branch with signed jacket

Lee Carsley shows off the exclusive signed leather jacket in the Football Echo.

Now, the Premiership star has had a novel way of raising funds for DSL. He has got his Everton team-mates to put their signatures to an exclusive Planet Hollywood leather jacket he was presented with on a recent training break in New York.

All the players received one but Carsley hit upon the idea of getting his autographed before auctioning it on Everton's official website. "The jacket has been signed by the first team squad to raise money for Down Syndrome LIVERPOOL," he said.

"Hopefully I can meet up with them in the future, give them a nice cheque and see what they are going to do with the money. I've not done anything well," said Carsley. "Having the charity helps, as we are able to do a lot more than the government can provide."

"We help a lot and all money goes to good quarters and is used properly. It's all about raising awareness so that we can help the kids."

Those lessons would not have been possible without the efforts of the Solihull branch.



Lee Carsley shows off the exclusive signed leather jacket in the Football Echo.

A recently raised £580.39 for DSL by walking the Inca Trail

One of the world's classic treks, The Inca Trail lies between the Sacred Valley of the Urubamba River and the mysterious abandoned citadel of Machu Picchu.

Climbing out of the river valley, crossing rugged mountain passes over 13,000 ft high, the trail winds through the Andes, passing numerous significant Inca ruins en route before descending through the Sun Gate to the silent stone city of Machu Picchu.

It is said to hike the Inca Trail is a thrilling experience and a very great privilege.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Anne, a sponsored silence to support Syndrome LIVERPOOL.

Katie, from Wavertree, along with dad John an sister Sophie, walked 8 miles.

From the Inca Trail to a Wavertree park - donations come in many ways

teacher at Belvidere School, for her kind donation. Anne comes from Katie McDermott, excess of £100 along with Northway Park.

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Awareness Week looms

Awareness Week this year will be 4th-10th June.

Each year, the DSA aim to use Down's Syndrome Awareness Week to:

- highlight a particular issue and campaign for action
- increase public awareness and understanding of the condition in general
- raise much-needed funds to enable us to continue our work

The main focus of the week this year will be improving employment prospects for adults with down's syndrome.

The DSA launched their employment campaign at the beginning of the year.

Inside

- 02 Chairman's report
- 03 Support group success
- 04 Everton star's support

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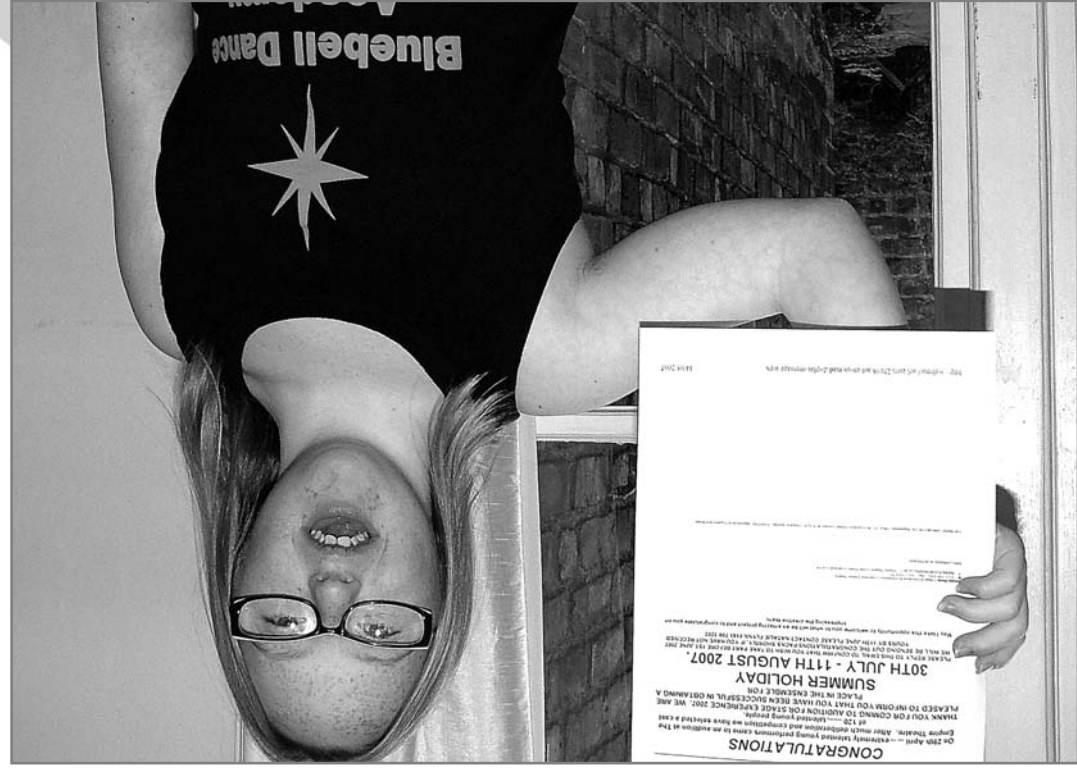
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Shauna Hogan shows off the letter telling her of her Summer Holiday audition success.

Shauna's dreams come true

When the postman delivered a letter to Shauna Hogan's home recently, who'd have thought it would contain all Shauna's dreams come true?

The Calderstones School pupil will now perform in the hit stage musical in her Theatre for a cast of one hundred and twenty. Shauna congratulated Shauna on an amazing project and impressed the creative team.

Anyone who knows Shauna will be aware of her talent for performance. She competes all over the country in an Irish dance troupe, and has won many awards and plaunts along the way.

Indeed committee members know first hand of her love of singing and dancing from the sounds above us from her bedroom during monthly meetings. One of her favourites being School Musical. So watch out Liverpool, a new star is born.

Anyone who knows Shauna will be aware of her love of performing

That's exactly what happened when Liverpool Empire Theatre informed Shauna, 14, of Wavertree Design: Thomas Regan, Margaret Hogan and Rena Wright

in her audition for a place in the ensemble for their forthcoming show Summer Holiday.

On 29th April this year, over two hundred extremely talented young performers auditioned at the Empire

home town between 30th July and 11th August this year.

Natalie Flynn, Head of Education & Community at Liverpool Empire Theatre congratulated Shauna on her achievement, "this will be a new star out Liverpool, a new star is born."

Chairman's Report

JOHN HOGAN



Irish dancers entertained the people at our most recent event.

Irish eyes smiling at latest fundraising event

Time flies, it doesn't seem long since the last issue of Downtime was published and as usual it has been a busy time for Down Syndrome LIVERPOOL.

On the 16th of March we held our Irish Night at Christ the King Social Club. The evening had everything an Irish night should have - Irish dancers, Irish singers and, lots of Guinness!

"we need more support from wider membership"

My day job, seriously though it was good fun. On the night over a hundred people attended and after costs we made £600 on ticket sales and an auction. That's the good news.

Our young people need help with employment

• from page 1
The three key messages that the DSA will be promoting are:

1. Out of a potential workforce of 15,000, only 16% of adults with Down's syndrome are in employment
2. With the right support, people with DS can and do make a significant contribution to their workplace
3. Many employers need more information and support to enable them to employ someone with DS successfully.

"we're planning events for Awareness Week"

This has been brought home to me recently after talking with two parents of young people who are desperately trying to get a job, but getting very little support and encouragement to do so.

If you are planning anything let us know how it goes and we can include it in our next issue of Downtime.

DSL a key voice on women's hospital membership council

Down Syndrome LIVERPOOL is one of only two appointed members on Hospital Women's Membership Council.

Being part of this membership council at the Liverpool Women's Hospital has given us the opportunity to highlight areas of concern, especially with regard to passing on information to those who require it. We have also been afforded the opportunity to discuss how to improve services to those with learning difficulties and how information about Down's syndrome in particular is disseminated within the hospital.

It's more than just parties...

Sometimes it's hard to be positive about those kind of meetings, as some of us who have been around a long time have been giving the local authority our views on issues like this over and over again seeing changes happen very slowly.

In April I was invited, along with several other parents to attend a consultation meeting designed to get the views of parents who have a disabled child on Liverpool's Child Care support. The government requires all local authorities to report on what they are doing on these services. Liverpool have engaged independent consultants to get this information.

Before attending I spoke to a number of our members on what issues were relevant to them to be sure that I would get it right. The issues were:

- access to, and quality of child care places in local nurseries
- the training and attitudes of child care staff
- the lack of trained and experienced child minders.

The group has been active for the past nine months and has been very successful in supporting parents and enabling the children to make friends and enjoy the playtime they spend together. We would be pleased to welcome new families to drop in and have a cup of tea and a chat at the Wavertree Children's centre on the first and third Monday of each month between 12-15pm and 2pm.



Children enjoying just some of the activities on offer at Wavertree.

"changes are happening... albeit very slowly"

meetings and forums to ensure services are provided that meets the needs of our children and young people.

One hopes the government will respond by continuing to fund June's work. As an organisation we again need to continue to be represented in this.

John Hogan