

# vitalink

The newsletter for Through the Roof

No.47 Spring 2010

## Wheels 4 Haiti

Devastation caused by the earthquake



UN Peacekeepers loading an injured person onto a truck

Chris Grayling MP

Following January's terrible earthquake in Haiti, Through the Roof has set up a special fund for future projects work there, called 'Wheels 4 Haiti'.

Much of the initial giving to Haiti is for alleviating the immediate crisis. Even as the story falls away from the headlines, and the wreckage starts to be cleared, the longterm problem remains huge, and with so many leg injuries there is going to be an ongoing need for wheelchairs

and for medical professionals to assist in fitting and advice. Through the Roof is fully equipped to contribute through our **Wheels for the World** programme. As regular readers will know, we recycle wheelchairs that would have been discarded, and have them refurbished to a very high standard at a prison. We then distribute them with expert medical and technical support to assist in fitting. We've a report from the recent Ghana distribution, illustrating what we do, later on in this newsletter.

However, to deliver to Haiti we need funding. Our target is to raise £10,000 to cover the cost of one distribution to Haiti (200 chairs) and if we raise more than this we can help with volunteer personal costs and more or larger distributions.

The project was launched with a special event in Epsom's Horton Golf Club on the 26th March, featuring guest speaker, Chris Grayling, MP for Epsom & Ewell and Shadow Home Secretary. We'll be running more events and raising awareness over the next few months to help create these funds, but we welcome your support and ideas for this programme and all our work. Specific giving guarantees specific delivery of help for this specific need in Haiti.

## And here's one novel and delicious way to raise funds

Advice on food seems to change on a weekly basis - this week, chocolate doubles your weight, lemonade doubles your lifespan, and brussel sprouts give your hair lustre and body. Next week, we should all probably be eating raw oats and locusts. However, here's one sure way to make munching much chocolate a good thing (Through the Roof cannot be held responsible for waistlines).

On Wednesday 24th February, one group of friends held a 'Chocoholics' party in Worcester Park, Surrey. The commission for sales of chocolates was donated to the 'Wheels 4 Haiti' project, so people picked up Easter eggs, birthday presents and early Mother's Day gifts - all raising money to help with future work in Haiti. If you have an unusual or creative fundraising idea or story, please do get in touch and let us know. We'd be very happy to let Vital Link readers know all about it!

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On the adventure trail  
at the family holiday

## TTR's Holiday at Dalesdown 2010

Through the Roof will be returning to the Dalesdown centre in Sussex for another holiday for families with children on the autistic spectrum from 6th to 9th April. We can take up to 9 families and provide a team of one-to-one helpers to look after the autistic children. This holiday is a great break for families, offering time all-together (including siblings) and space for parents to relax, knowing that their children are in good hands. The holiday is unique and families travel from all over Britain to experience the relaxation, fun and fellowship we provide. One parent commented: 'This holiday has provided me with

the most stress-free time I can remember. Our one-to-one helper was superb, and the whole holiday felt like an extraordinary blessing from God to us.' We're all getting ready at the office for an excellent, exciting and tiring few days, and look forward to reporting back in our next issue.

If you would like more information or to find out how to support this unique and necessary holiday, please contact:

Margaret Bale (Administration Manager, Through the Roof) on **01372 749955** or email: [margaret@throughtheroof.org](mailto:margaret@throughtheroof.org)

Through the roof

## What a Giveaway!

In the last 3 months of 2009 we gave away over 250 of our publications to help equip and inspire churches and other organisations to be more inclusive of disabled people. Truro Diocese in Cornwall, and Godstone Deanery in Surrey took particular advantage of the offer, with many of their churches now in possession of 'Removing Barriers', 'All Welcome' or one of four other helpful publications. We hope all the churches that took part are pleased with their 'freebies' and are inspired to continue developing the life of their church – releasing everyone's full potential. Please get in touch to tell us if these resources have had an effect on your church or group.

For those churches that missed out on this offer, we are happy to make these publications available to you for a small cost – especially now, during our Spring sale – via our website shop, order form, or phone contact with the office.

## SPRING SALE



Until 30th June Through the Roof will be offering several of our publications for half-price. During this bargainous quarter, we're proud to offer...

- **'Removing Barriers'** (our self-assessment resource for helping you improve the inclusivity of your services, activities and programmes) for £1.50 (Was £3)
- **'Be a Roofbreaker!'** (a guide to equipping churches and communities to become welcoming and secure places for all) for £2.50 (was £5)
- **'All Welcome'** (a best practice guide to including disabled people in the life of the church) for £2.50 (was £5)
- **'Intentional 1'** (our resources for Christian leaders working with young disabled people) for £2.50 (was £5) and
- **'Come in!'** (a booklet on making church buildings accessible) for the low, low price of £5.00 (was £10).

Pick up these essential resources today! (or really soon.) They're all available from our website, by calling the office on **01372 749955**, or using the enclosed order form.

## Opening the Doors DVD

We're now stocking the **'Opening the Doors'** DVD. Produced for the Church of England, this DVD is the inspirational story of the inclusion of people with learning disabilities and autism into the full life of the church. It's available from Through the Roof for £1.25 per copy and would be ideal to share with a small group or church.

## Give a Gift of Possibility

Recognise a special occasion in a different and meaningful way with this 'gift of possibility', making a difference to the lives of disabled people and donating to the work of Through the Roof in the name of a friend. In return for a 'gift of possibility' you will receive a colour printed card with 1 of 4 original TTR designs. The wording inside the card will say: 'This card is to let you know that disabled people have been given the gift of possibility on your behalf'. There will also be space for you to add your own personal message. Contact TTR, or visit [www.throughtheroof.org](http://www.throughtheroof.org) to find out more.





Karl prays with a recipient

## Ghana 2009

*By the 2009 Ghana team*



The team gave out bibles and ministered to all

On the 28th October a team of eleven set off for a distribution in Ghana. Six members of the team had not previously been on a Wheels trip, but within a very short time we were at home with the work. It was altogether an excellent team and all worked together very well, ready to help each other when needed.

This was the fourth Wheels distribution in Ghana and once again we worked with Ellen and a team from Light Outreach; most of them came on all the distributions and their ability to translate was

a great help to the team. Our work areas varied from a church, verandas or under the trees. As always some of those who had registered did not come but many more came in hope and in most cases we were able to help them with some form of equipment. In one distribution area we found 15 chairs hidden behind the building! With some difficulty the owners were identified and many chairs were able to be repaired, although a couple did have to be scrapped. This freed up other chairs to be given to other clients.

On the Sunday, the team was able to visit 6 different churches between them, and were made welcome and enjoyed the experience of worship in Ghana. Most people had the opportunity to talk about why we were there, and share what the work of Wheels is all about. That evening we went to the community centre where many homeless people gather and are given tea and bread. One team member, Karl, was able to share the gospel with the adults while others sang songs with the children.

Karl also had the opportunity to talk and minister to nearly all those who received equipment. Many made a commitment to

Christ, including two Muslims. On two occasions we had a group of people who were blind turning up hoping to get a white stick. Before they were sent away Karl said he would pray for them, as a result many of them miraculously had improved or clear sight.

We give God the Glory for all he enabled us to see, to hear and to do. For special moments like the joy on people's faces when they had a chair and a Bible, or seeing a man who waited all day and had been crying as he had not registered and needed a chair. Fantastically, the very last one was suitable for him! He was speechless but incredibly happy as for the first time in his life he didn't have to crawl everywhere.

This was an excellent distribution, with all the transported wheelchairs given away and several others repaired. In all, we saw over 300 people. The team worked very hard, often long days, with very little - if any - break but always came up smiling. We all have memories of Ghana, both sad and happy, and were so grateful for all the prayer support we received from people at home. We knew that even when we did not have much time to pray together, God was with us.

## Shine

Shine is a Christian adventure holiday for young adults in their 20s and 30s, with and without physical disabilities, of any and no faith. It's being run in partnership between Through the Roof and Scripture Union between 15-19 July 2010. It'll be a full-on adventure holiday offering a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities tailored to accommodate all levels of ability or disability (special facilities and equipment all provided).

A massive range of activities are available including rock climbing, abseiling, an assault course, caving and canoeing, all in the beautiful countryside situated between the Lake District and the Yorkshire Dales. Why not discover who God is in a relaxed, fun and open environment? There will be main meetings and small group Bible study times including the opportunity to ask questions and discuss topics that matter to you. **To find out more, contact Scripture Union on 0114 2669062.**





*Jacky Oliver*  
Chief Executive Officer

## Letter from the CEO

'Grandma, I can write my name! Let me show you', beamed my four year old grandson. He had learnt something and was so excited and keen to put it into practice. Whether we are old or young we never stop learning, but just gathering information is of little value if we never apply it. In Vital Link, we're always keen to tell you about our disability awareness training and resources. These are always fun, practical, challenging and informative sessions. Of course, unless we put into practice all we have learnt about removing the barriers to disabled people being able to live life to the full, and to experience the freedom of knowing Jesus, we have achieved nothing. My prayer is that in 2010 you enjoy the wonder of new skills, new awareness and love for people affected by disability, and new revelations from God. Like my grandson may we then be excited and keen to say 'let me put into practice what I have learnt' (Phil 4 v9).

## God Knows Best

*By Jenny Edwards*

Wow, have I learnt from the events of the past few weeks! Many of you will know I have been in hospital for an operation, and the picture for the outcome of that op was painted very black. It was necessary though and I felt a peace about it all, then the date was altered twice, one time being just as I was on the way to theatre! What was that all about?

So many times we are told 'God knows best' aren't we? We nod and say yes we know that, but do we really trust that He does know best? Just before the third op date, was Christmas, which unexpectedly I was able to spend with my family, my nephew was home from Denver, and my young great niece was also there – a day I would have missed had I been in hospital as previously planned – I had a wonderful Christmas. The following days were spent at home and with friends, one friend in particular was with me a lot, along with her little dog. She needed encouragement and support in many ways, and we gave that to each other. Since she wasn't a believer, we were not able to share things of the Lord, but I believe those were very special days, for just before I went into hospital, my friend died – I was the last person to see her.

God knows best? Yes, He really does. None of the above would have been possible should the operation have taken place when first arranged. Not only was it good for me to have Christmas with family, but to spend those days with my friend, both for her and for me was very special. What an amazing God we have – and yes, the op has been successful and none of the black predictions given came to pass – prayers were answered. I'm not surprised - are you? God Knows Best!

# From Joni Eareckson Tada...

Dear Roof-Breaking Friends...

Someone asked me the other day, "What is the biggest struggle most disabled people face?" I had a ready answer. "Himself," I answered, "or herself, as the case may be." It drew a funny look, so I explained, "When you have a disability, it screams for your undivided attention. It is very hard not to be constantly thinking about yourself and your own needs."

It's true. The constant aches and pains of arthritis or spinal cord injury, the daily maintenance of a wheelchair, or trying to find attendant care... all of it demands attention. These things can force a disabled person's focus inward. And so, the greatest challenge to people with disabilities is to keep pushing beyond the limitations to care about the needs of others.

This is why I am so grateful for my friends at Through the Roof. This ministry focuses on helping families affected by disability look beyond themselves to the needs of others – especially those whose plight is more critical than their own!

The Message paraphrases Philippians 2:4-5 this way, '*Put yourself aside and help others. Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand. Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of Himself. He had equal status with God but didn't think so much of Himself that He had to cling to the advantages of that status.*' My friends at Through the Roof would say the same. Friend, in 2010, keep looking outward... keep lending a helping hand... don't cling to your own wants and wishes... put yourself aside and help others in the name of Jesus!



## Through the Roof's Training is a Waste of Time...

By Tim Wood

Unless, as the Bible and the theme of this newsletter says, 'whatever you have learned (is) put...into practice' (Philippians 4:9). Through the Roof's desire is that as a result of our training workshops, more churches will put into practice the ideas and activities they have learned, to welcome more disabled people into church life, and include the gifts and skills they have to give, so that everyone will be built up in their faith.

To maximise the potential impact of our workshops, they include real-life examples, and small group discussion of practical scenarios so those attending can learn from each other. Time is also dedicated to forming a personalised Action Plan relevant to the situation of the church and individuals. Over the last few months many churches and organisations have benefited including Salvation Army Pastoral Ministry students in South London. Olton Baptist church, Solihull and New Malden URC both received training to include young people with autism in church life; whilst Adeyfield Free Church and Oxford Vineyard Church hosted TTR trainers leading a workshop on the inclusion of young disabled people. Positive feedback from those attending included: 'Saturday's Disability Course was brilliant... It was very professionally presented without being intimidating, you might say user-friendly!' Graduates on the Leadership Programme at CARE's Institute for Faith and Culture, Central London received a session on 'A Christian Approach to Disability', with one delegate commenting that 'Through the Roof really challenged my idea and perception'.

If your church wishes to learn more practical strategies and ideas of inclusion, based on Biblical principles, to enable those with autism, mental health issues, or other disabilities to be included in church life, get in touch or visit our website for more details.

You can also purchase our DVD resource, 'Opening the Doors', which demonstrates churches putting inclusion into practice to show your congregation.



Holiday-goers and helpers on the Blackpool 09 holiday

## DCF Holiday Helpers Urgently Required

We need more helpers for the Babbacombe holiday in Devon, 31 July – 7 August, and for the Blackpool holiday, 13 – 20th September. Cost heavily subsidised – please contact us on **01372 749955** if you are interested.

**Thank you!**



Wheels leader Glenda and friend on the Ghana distribution

## Wheels Distributions in 2010

There are currently two more distributions planned for 2010: Kampala, Uganda from June 9th to 19th and Nyeri, Kenya from November 10th to 20th, along with one to Kimilili, Kenya, that will be finishing just as this issue comes out. There are still spaces on the Nyeri trip, and we need techies for Uganda. If you're interested in finding out more, or being one of those helpers, please get in touch.

Through the roof

## Destination: Europe

Disabled people in both the UK and developing countries have benefited from Through the Roof's work for several years and now TTR is extending its involvement to its European neighbours.

Through the Roof recently joined with other Christian disability ministries from around Europe, including UK partners Causeway Prospects, at a Steering Group meeting of the European Disability Network (EDN) in Brussels. Development Manager, Tim Wood, was there to provide support and encouragement to those involved – most of whom are volunteers and affiliates of Joni and Friends – whilst also ensuring TTR brings a positive inclusive influence, along with other members of the group, to the wider European Christian scene. Plans are underway for a Hope For Europe conference in 2011 for different European-wide Christian networks (e.g. Education, Theology etc.) to attend, at which EDN is seeking to present disability as an integral issue for all groups, churches and networks to address. This will challenge churches and Christian Ministries to ensure the needs of disabled people across Europe are considered.

## Through the Roof is at Capetown 2010

We are delighted to announce that Through the Roof will be represented at the historic Capetown 2010 event, running from the 16th to the 25th October. Our chief executive, Jacky Oliver, has been selected as one of only 70 people to be invited from the UK. "It's a privilege to be invited to this event," said Jacky, "most importantly, I'm attending to ensure that the inclusive language does indeed mean everyone, including those of us who live with some form of disability."

Cape Town 2010, held in collaboration with the World Evangelical Alliance, will bring together 4,000 leaders from more than 200 countries to confront how the critical issues of our time – other world faiths, poverty, HIV/AIDS and persecution, among others – relate to the future of the Church and world evangelization.

Thousands more leaders will participate in the discussion on the issues through the Lausanne Global Conversation and at remote congress sites through the Cape Town Globalink. You can learn more about the event, and how to get further involved by visiting their website -- [www.lausanne.org/cape-town-2010](http://www.lausanne.org/cape-town-2010).

We'd really appreciate your help and support getting ready – you could...

- Offer to be part of a prayer network for Jacky – contact us to find out more.
- Log onto Global link and keep involved with the discussion – visit [www.lausanne.org/cape-town-2010](http://www.lausanne.org/cape-town-2010)
- Log onto our website for updates and to give us your comments – [www.throughtheroof.org](http://www.throughtheroof.org)



Through the roof

# How to have fun and raise money!

By Jan Trapmore

(Ashtead volunteer and ace sandwich maker)

We are blessed in Ashtead with two couples who organise bi-monthly Charity Bridge Drives, held at the Peace Memorial Hall and St Michaels Church Hall. There are on average 90 people who come for a fun evening to play bridge and the entrance money raised each month, together with the proceeds of the raffle is given to a different charity. As charities can apply to participate, these events give a

great opportunity to raise money for 'Wheels'.

Our team provide the interval refreshments, the raffle prizes and a speaker to give a short talk on why we are supporting 'Wheels' and where the money raised will go. Eileen Sutherland has been an excellent speaker in the past, but one of our volunteers, Alasdair Wallace, gave an inspiring talk at our most recent event.

We have a wonderful team who work diligently to make the evening a success and serve with willing cheerful hearts. At this event we raised £522, which made all the efforts worthwhile.....and had fun in the process - what more could we ask? As a team we have been blessed in so many ways by God's goodness so it is a joy to put our gifts into action for this worthy cause.



Having fun and raising money in Ashtead



## Michael's Twopenn'orth

By Operations Manager,  
Michael Jamison

A visit from the auditors is always a time of mixed feelings. It's good to catch up on the previous year, but you're also wondering if they will find something's been missed. By the time you read this we'll have sent off our accounts to the Charity Commissioners. Every year the auditors also send a management letter to our board with any general comments or points to note. As per usual they found little this year to comment on but I would like to share with you one quote:

"Once again we have been impressed by the commitment of the charity, its Trustees and staff to adopting the best possible practice which is a true credit to the organisation". I do this not to brag but to show how seriously we take the donations entrusted to us to see people with a disability be included into the life of the Church and reach their full potential.

We have been going through an exercise of looking at new declarations to see how much Gift Aid we could claim from previous years and have achieved nearly £1,000. I would like now to ask a favour. We could write to you asking if you pay tax that we could claim back on donations sent to us, but that would be very expensive. Could I ask that if you pay any tax we could claim back, you contact the office to see if we have a declaration from you? If we don't it will be an easy task to send one to you, thank you.

Can I also say a thank you to those who responded to my mention of the availability of a leaflet about leaving a legacy to Through the Roof. These leaflets are still available, and I would be very happy to answer any questions you may have about the whole process.

## Exhibitions

Through the Roof has been exhibiting at the Faithworks conference 'Building Whole Communities' in Enfield in late February and at the Mind and Soul 'The Beautiful Mind' conference at Holy Trinity Brompton, London on Friday 26th March. Thank you if you came and saw us, or signed up for the Vital Link there and then.

We'll be exhibiting at the Christian Resources Exhibition, 11th – 14th May at Sandown Park, Esher, as part of a new 'Churches for All' disability zone. We will be situated in a different area to usual at stand T12, to the left of the main entrance, sharing the area with other disability ministries and providing new resources, interactive seminars and presentations. If you're attending, please come over to visit us!

## Donations

We endeavour to personally thank all donors of over £20, but sometimes it isn't possible, for many good reasons, to get in contact with every generous giver. Here's a list of those we haven't been able to reach -- thank you all so much for your gifts. Anon cash donation, Anon CAF Donation, Anon CAF donation for WFTW, Dollimore, Anon via Charity Choice, M Scane, Mr Judge and all those who donated through Jacky Oliver's birthday, raising over £300.

# Introducing...



Simon, Sarah and Amy

TTR is excited to welcome a new board member, Simon Nicholson, who joined the trustees last September. Here are a few words from him...

'I live in Sheffield with my wonderful wife Sarah, and beautiful newborn baby girl Amy. I am 34 years old, a qualified accountant, and for the last 7 years have worked for Henry Boot Plc, where I am currently Finance Director of the Construction subsidiary. I have one fantastic brother Mark, who is himself a wheelchair user, and so have grown up involved and aware of the opportunities and issues that disabled people face.

Sarah and I have led a church home group for non-disabled and disabled young adults, and for approximately 10 years we have led a Scripture Union holiday called "Rise". We are very excited at the prospect of a new activity holiday for able bodied and disabled young adults being launched this summer called "Shine", which you can read about in this Vital Link. In my spare time I enjoy playing football, running, squash, scuba diving and hiking in the Peak District. It's a privilege to serve God in this capacity as a Trustee for Through The Roof.'

## Parachute Bible Stories



Parachute games and stories

Not a tale about Bible drops from passing planes, but a brand new series of Integr8 resource sheets to provide churches and youth groups with an interactive and memorable way to teach Bible stories using a fun parachute. Parachute Bible stories provide Bible truths in clear, understandable text; with supplementary notes on how to use a parachute to illustrate each story and tips on how to ensure all abilities are included. These resources will enable leaders to provide memorable and meaningful sessions for groups large and small, accessible to all abilities. Several sheets, including 'Moses Crosses the Red Sea', are being made available to download free from TTR's new-look integr8 website ([youth.throughtheroof.org](http://youth.throughtheroof.org)), or e-mail us for your free copies.

## TTR on Facebook

facebook

Through the Roof runs a page on the social networking site 'Facebook' – if you're a member, please do search through the site for 'Through the Roof' and become a 'fan'. We update people on our work, ask questions about upcoming projects and encourage people to get in touch with other supporters round the country. At the time of writing, nearly 200 supporters are on the site. Please have a look and think about joining up!

## Upgrade

We've launched our new website, still at [www.throughtheroof.org](http://www.throughtheroof.org), but all shiny and rejigged. Please do wander over and have a look at what's available. We're adding new content rapidly and regularly and look forward to your visit!



### CONTACT DETAILS

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### OUR MISSION

Through the Roof's mission is to make the Christian message of salvation through Jesus Christ available to people affected by disability.

### OUR VISION

Through the Roof's vision is to see all disabled people be free to reach their full potential.

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