

vital link

Transforming lives through disabled people



Joy and Transformation in Kosovo

Wheels for the World Bringing Freedom in Eastern Europe

Urem laughed and smiled as he wheeled himself around the flat. This was the first time he – a twenty year old man – had ever moved independently! Our team had arrived earlier to meet Urem and his sister and two brothers. Urem, the middle child, has cerebral palsy, and had plaster of paris on both legs and hips for many years. Because of this, he couldn't bend his hips or sit up. He spent his life on a mattress on the floor of his family's first-floor flat. His dad died years ago, and his mother passed away earlier in 2014. This family were really struggling. We assessed Urem, and felt we could get him up with an appropriate wheelchair. We found a chair, and – with a bit of creativity – worked out how to strap him in. He'd never wheeled himself before, but he put one hand on the wheel, and moved a little backwards and forwards to try it out. Being slightly upright will give Urem a different view on the world; he can be wheeled around his flat – helping his family avoid back injuries from carrying him – and onto the balcony where he can enjoy fresh air and a new view. His family hope that one day they might be able to carry him down the stairs and take him out, but these initial changes made a huge difference for Urem.

In June, Wheels for the World visited Kosovo for the first time. We saw 91 clients and distributed 121 wheelchairs whilst working with SEED KOSOVA in Gjakove. Many we saw had complex needs, some of which could have been avoided

with the right treatment. Few disabled children go to school, and parents are destined for a life of caring and carrying. Many Kosovans are nominal Muslims and it was wonderful to be able to pray and work with so many people.

People like Jusuf, a 61 year old farmer who has spent the last six months in his room. Following diabetes-related complications, he'd had his leg amputated, and was now reliant on his family to do everything for him, and growing increasingly depressed. He only visited the doctor when in pain and couldn't regularly monitor his sugar levels as he did not have money for the equipment.

When we told him that with a wheelchair he could go back outside he broke down in tears. The transformation from a helpless man lying on a mat to an active father pushing himself up the garden was breath-taking! It was a privilege to witness the family's joy.

Rob, our nurse, explained the importance of managing his diabetes and we left monitoring equipment. We were able to share the gospel and a Bible and his cousin mentioned that he had never heard praying like that although he has been going to the mosque for years.

This trip has changed the lives of over a hundred families, just like all Wheels trips change lives. It's your support that makes them possible – please click on <https://www.justgiving.com/ttr/> to donate.



God Does More Than We Could Ever Imagine



Join Our Roofbreakers



A Wealth of Wisdom



Take in Break in 2015

A Decade of Dalesdown!

Through the roof

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Churches inc

Fellowship DCF

Wheels for the World

Our Vision

'... is of a world where all people live interdependently, mutually giving and receiving as God intended.'

Through the Roof Charitable Trust Ltd is a UK Registered Company number 04201510 with offices at Unit B1, Aviary Court, 138 Miles Road, Epsom, KT19 9AB. It is also a Registered Charity Number 1087788.

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www.pdc-kingston.co.uk

In 2015 we will be holding our tenth holiday at Dalesdown for families with children with autism, and we're celebrating this special year with TWO holidays.

Called **Dalesdown PLUS**, the second holiday will be held in October and aimed at an older age range – mostly teenagers, although we will be flexible where siblings cross age limits. The programme will be similar in structure and outings, though we're planning new activities more appropriate for older children, including an exciting puppet workshop and show, and bonfire night with soup and hotdogs.

Both **Easter Dalesdown** and **Dalesdown Plus** are family holidays, providing one-to-one helpers to support whole families taking a break together. Although remaining autism focused, we are now happy to take applications

Changing Churches Inc

We believe that integral mission through the church is the way to meet the ever-changing needs and diversity we've encountered in our Integr8 trips. Since 2008, we've visited many communities as part of our overseas inclusive education missions, and seen great changes in all of them. Over that time, the needs of our partners and visited countries have broadened, and in 2014 we trained not only teachers, but a growing number of church leaders, government officials, social workers, disabled people and community leaders. As such, our Integr8 trips will now be called **Churches Inc** trips. The principles and



Plenty of different activities for everyone on our Treloar holiday

The ever-popular seaside holiday at Babbacombe in Devon runs from the 12th to 19th September. We'll be enjoying the seafront, and doubtless several excursions to local beauty spots.

There'll be an activity holiday at Treloar College, from the 27th to 31st July. There are new activities planned, and plenty of accessible challenges will be on offer.

Before the activity holiday, there'll be a retreat at Treloar from the 25th to 27th July – this is a separate event from the holiday, though people are obviously welcome to attend both!

Contact Jenny at the office to find out more and to book. We're also looking for caring helpers for all of these holidays. Could you help someone to have a much-needed break?



Twice the fun with two Dalesdown holidays in 2015

from families whose children have other learning difficulties, including Downs Syndrome.

Bookings are now being taken for next year's holidays and the dates are:

- **Easter Dalesdown** 7– 10 April 2015
- **Dalesdown PLUS** 27– 30 October 2015

If you want to know more, please email margaret@throughtheroof.org.



Training to make a difference in Moldova, Mozambique, Uganda, and beyond

vision remain the same, but recognise that our main vehicle of change is the church, to help fulfil TTR's vision 'of a world where all people live interdependently, mutually giving and receiving, as God intended'.

Take a Break in 2015

Join DCF at the Paradise Hotel in Paradise Bay, Malta from May 19th to 29th 2015. We're running a fully accessible holiday, close to the beautiful beach, with excursions, outdoor activities, and plenty of time of fellowship and learning together. There are plans to look at Paul's time in Malta (which you can find in Acts 28), and to learn more of the significance of those passages to our Christian lives.



Roofbreakers work in their churches to make a positive change for all

Job Hunters

Join Our Roofbreakers

The Bible indicates that Job was a champion of disabled people. In Job 29:14-16 he writes, 'I put on righteousness as my clothing; justice was my robe and my turban. I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. I was a father to the needy; I took up the case of the stranger.' Job was clearly a man concerned for justice, with a pastoral heart and missionary intent.

As part of our vision to see the church enriched by the full involvement of disabled people and their families, we're now looking for people like Job who, with regular support and resources from Through the Roof, could make a positive difference in their own church by serving as a **Roofbreaker**. We can offer a 'Starter kit', monthly ideas and encouragement, plus the

opportunity to meet with others locally in an Area Network.

We will be encouraging Roofbreakers to form small teams to do 3 things: **Build** relationships – this could be as simple as having a cup of tea and a chat with a disabled member of your congregation

Connect with activities – be aware of local Christian groups relevant to disabled people to pass on details

Serve the church – partner with fellow church members to make church life more inclusive of disabled people

You can read about the launch of the project in our next Vital Link and if you want to sign-up, or find out more, please e-mail info@throughtheroof.org.

More on Missions

Get in touch if you'd like to be part of any of the next year's work

More details are now available about the next year of international work. If you are interested in further details, please get in touch.

Uganda - Kampala: Churches Inc Training trip
Partner is RILD- Response Initiative for Learning Disabilities
www.rilduganda.org/
Trip dates: March 28th – 7th April 2015
Cost: £500 + flights

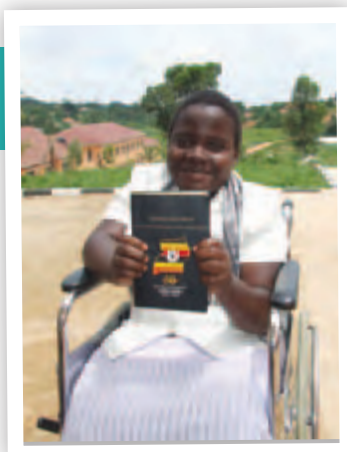
Kenya - Eldoret: Wheels for the World
Partner is Liza Cooke and Diocese of Eldoret, we are returning after a mini visit last year.
www.davidandlizacooke.wordpress.com/
Trip dates: 1st- 10th May 2015
Cost: £650 + flights

Kosovo / Albania - Gjakova: Wheels for the World
Partner is SEED Kosova this will be our second visit with them.
Trip dates: 17th- 26th June 2015
Cost: £500 + flights

Mozambique – Maputo: Churches Inc Training trip
Partner is Melvin Kelly with ONE Mission. This will be our first visit to Mozambique
www.onemissionsociety.org.uk/ (search for 'Kelly')
Trip dates: 14th – 26th August 2015
Cost: £600 + flights

Moldova – Dancu: Churches Inc Training trip
Partner is Breadline we have been with three times previously.
www.breadlinemoldova.org/
Trip dates: Sept 2015 Cost: £400 + flight

Ghana – Ho: Wheels for the World
Partner is Ellen from Light Outreach
www.thelightoutreach.org.uk/
Trip dates: Oct 21st – 31st 2015 Cost: £500 + flight



Wheels trips will now always include training to promote sustainable and ongoing work

Making a Lasting Difference

International Missions Day

International Missions volunteers have agreed that all future Wheels for the World trips will now include training for our in-country partners, passing on skills and helping to make an enduring difference to communities with every distribution. Twelve supporters met for a great day of discussion, planning, and sharing news at the second of our 'International Missions Days' this September. As well as agreeing on this positive development about training, the team received updates and investigated how different training materials could be used as part of trips to ensure sustainability. If you would be interested in attending, or receiving the regular International news by email (which will contain details of the next IM day), please contact reninca@throughtheroof.org

From Joni Eareckson Tada



Dear Roof-breaking Friend,

My wheelchair draws lots of comments such as, "Do you have a driver's license for that thing?" or "Watch it, don't run me over!" I'm surprised how many people initiate conversations with me, based on my wheelchair. But that's *great*. Usually a Christian has to engage people's interest, hoping for a chance to share the Gospel. But not so with me. It's *wonderful* that the wheelchair does the 'initiating'!

That's exactly what happens on every Wheels for the World outreach conducted by *Through the Roof* – the gift of a wheelchair opens up the door to share the love of Jesus Christ. Our Wheels team recently returned from Kosovo where we served people with many complex disabilities – we needed great creativity to adapt each wheelchair and walker. But it spoke so loudly of Christ's compassion to each family. We encountered many nominal Muslims who had not heard of Jesus Christ (what a wonderful opportunity to share the Good News).

It's the way *Through the Roof* does ministry. Whether serving in Kosovo, Uganda, or other countries, every TTR program is designed to meet not only the practical needs of people with disabilities, but spiritual needs, as well. And friend, may I suggest that you do the same? There are so many hurting people in our communities who need practical help and spiritual support – so be bold to offer up prayer for them, then care for their needs, and ultimately share the Gospel.

Let's take the love of Christ where it's needed most. And thank you for helping all of us at *Through the Roof* do just that as we shine the light of Christ into some of the darkest places in the world!

Joni Eareckson Tada

Part of a Family

by **Dr. Mike Townsend, Chair of Trustees**



'Belonging' is the new 'inclusion'. Confused? We all know about 'inclusive church' and a lot of us have been working towards that goal. Everyone, including disabled people, should be accepted as part of church.

One Christmas, we welcomed two special people to our usual crowd. One was expected to be an awkward relative. The other, a lonely person from church. We had a brilliant time together. The friend from church thanked us for

What can you do to help people feel 'part of a family'?

including her. The relative said how much she had enjoyed herself, and we detected no awkwardness. What was striking is that she also said, "I really felt I belonged as part of the family". Inclusion means that we are outsiders coming into a group. But, like my church friend, we enjoy inclusion, but are never fully part of the family. Often in church we are treated as 'special' or to be handled with care. With inclusion it is easy to slip out again into exclusion because we never really get to be part of the whole.

'Belonging' is a much better experience. Paul says, 'In Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.' (Rom 12:5). Belonging means that we form an integral part of the body — Christ's church. We enjoy and contribute to its life. Belonging is a key element in TTR's outcomes. We aim to support disabled people, and we advise and encourage churches and other Christian groups on ways to achieve the belonging experience.

It needs a change of mind-set. As Paul says in Rom 12:2, "transformed" and "renewed" thinking is required. The result is that I am no longer "that blind man" who must be included or sorted out somehow. I am "Mike". Like my not so awkward relative, I belong and feel part of God's family.

Disabled People: A Wealth of Wisdom



Churches can make simple changes that really encourage belonging

Early in 2014, we aimed to find out more about disabled people's experience of church. We asked four questions, aiming to find out the good and the bad for people in 2014.

Answers to the question 'What positive benefits does your disability add to your relationship with God?' displayed such a wealth of spiritual wisdom and maturity that we were left asking why so few disabled people are in leadership roles, when this is what they have to offer. For others the benefits were not clear, and there is a role for churches in encouraging and supporting these people.

We received a wide range of responses to the question 'What one thing do you wish churches knew?', covering physical access to the building, attitudes of church members, an acute sense of being discriminated against, neglected and excluded from what ought to be the most welcoming community in the world. Several of the respondents indicated that they had stopped going to church because of barriers and attitudes they encountered. None of these had forsaken their love for Jesus, and many were finding fellowship in informal groups.

In response to the question 'What's the most important thing your church could do for you?' many people spoke of needing their church to stand with them for the long haul, not just in the moments of crisis. The biggest heart-cry under this category was not just to be included on Sundays but to find genuine friendships in their church community. Particularly hurtful was people being "too busy" to help disabled people to participate.

Finally, we asked, "What do you wish your church would allow you to do for them?" Many people expressed a wish to do simple things (such as Bible readings, manning the sound desk or taking part in the flower rota) but it seems their churches had never thought to provide them with that opportunity. Many others had great spiritual, organisational or pastoral gifts which were going entirely to waste.

A longer summary of the results, including the top ten answers, can be found here: <http://www.throughtheroof.org/whats-your-experience/> We'll be producing new resources for churches and individuals based on this research.

Access Points

by Jenny Edward MBE

Jenny tries out the access to the archery at last year's Hinwick holiday

As I write, I am waiting for workmen to arrive and improve access to my back and front patios. They are being made smoother, for easy access, as I am a wheelchair user and even small steps are a hindrance. At the moment I bump over them, or get stuck as I try to get through the doors. When it's wet there's even more of a problem, the floor becomes slippery and access is really tough.

As I thought about this, it occurred to me how similar this access can be to stepping out in faith and trusting God. Sometimes circumstances hinder our entrance into His presence and we get stuck or have a difficult time realising we can have complete trust in Him in all circumstances of life. Just as being reluctant to cross the threshold stops me from

enjoying the patio and flowers, by being reluctant to trust God in some situations, we lose out on His amazing love and reassurance. My workmen have arrived while I have been writing this and soon my access will be smooth and easy. Trust God today for that problem and discover that He makes access possible for all who reach out for Him. Why not test out your access points to Him today?





Get in touch if you'd like to take part, or volunteer in 2015

Babbacombe – Better Each Year!

by Helen Edwards

Our final DCF holiday this year was at Babbacombe, Torquay, in July. Looking back, I am reminded of how much this holiday means to all who attended, and of God's goodness in making it possible.

We stayed at the Sefton Hotel, with wonderful seaviews, and staff committed to making our stay a happy one. Some guests had enjoyed DCF holidays before, and for some, this was their first time – but all were brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Myrtle again organised our meetings, with a mix of local speakers, and worship led by our own guests and helpers. On the Wednesday our meeting was led by Gospel Airs, a local male voice choir, and we were joined by some of the other hotel guests.

We enjoyed two outings, to Buckfast Abbey and to Teignmouth. I was very grateful to Michael in the office for his help when transport arrangements fell through, and we ended up with two fantastic drivers. I'm extremely grateful to God for all the blessings He showered on us, including the privilege of enabling such a brilliant group of guests to have an enjoyable holiday, and such a wonderful team of helpers to work with.

I think the guests and helpers are the best people to tell you about what the holiday meant for them: "I loved my experience with the guests, and am very inspired by their faith"; "I enjoyed all the friendship, fellowship and fun"; "the carers were excellent and very kind to us all"; "I liked being by the sea and the level path along the cliff top opposite the hotel"; "The staff were friendly and helpful"; "Excellent food"; "Smashing"; "The meetings have been GREAT – good teaching, singing, and fellowship"; "No one could better how wonderful the helpers are"; "It just gets better and better each year – looking forward to next year already"; "PRAISE THE LORD!"

Get in touch now to book your spot on a holiday next year!

Alison Moves On

After 11 years of dedication to the work of Through the Roof, Alison, our Admin and Projects Officer is moving on to new things. She has been an integral part of the team, has contributed much and will be missed. Thank you Alison – we pray God will bless all you do in the future.

www.throughtheroof.org

Conquering All Expectations

Conquerors from Ashtead did a fantastic job in getting sponsorship from friends and family and went ten times over their original target, raising an amazing £1031.45 (enough to sponsor 25 wheelchairs).

On the lovely sunny evening of 4th July a large group of members of the Ashtead Learning Difficulties Action Group Conquerors club, some parents, family members, carers and friends, set off on a sponsored walk from Overdale in Ashtead

to the Marld and St. Michaels hall where they meet every fortnight.

Conquerors are faithful supporters of Wheels for the World, and came up with this one-mile sponsored walk, hoping to raise enough to pay for a couple of wheelchairs. The walk was organised by Dee Peck, and for many of the members it was a great achievement, as they had not walked that distance for a long time - if ever. Well done Conquerors!



The amazing Conquerors raised ten times their expected target

Congratulations Tara & Phil

Phil Green, one of our regular Wheels members got married to Tara in July 2014. We're delighted to congratulate them, and wish them much happiness in their future.

As part of their wedding gifts they asked for donations to Wheels for the World, and raised over £300 from generous friends. Thank you!



Thank you Alison for all you've done for TTR!



Pedal Power

Michael Jamison, TTR's Operations Manager, is planning a sponsored bike ride from Guildford to Shoreham in September 2015. After many years off a bike, and a few months back on, travelling to work at our new Aldershot warehouse, he's now in training for this 37 mile journey, with the goal of raising funds for Through the Roof, and improving his own fitness. If you'd like to support and sponsor Michael, have a look at his fundraising page www.justgiving.com/Michael-Jamison/, or find out more about the story at his blog <https://downslink.wordpress.com>

Seize the Momentum

Through the Roof had a stand at Shepton Mallet's Momentum in August. Momentum is a large Christian festival, aimed at 20-30s, and it was a brilliant chance for representatives of TTR's International Missions programme to inspire a younger generation to get involved in our future distributions and projects. It was a great success, and we're looking forward to working with all our new contacts.

Hope on a Rope

Wheels for the World supporter, Paul Goodridge, recently climbed 249 steps up the spiral staircase of Guildford Cathedral tower to a height of 160 feet, only to be harnessed to a rope and launched off the top!

Friends, family and colleagues all sponsored Paul, who took part in the charity abseil to raise funds for Wheels for the World - giving hope of independence and inclusion to disabled people in developing countries, through the provision of mobility aids they otherwise wouldn't be able to access. His daring descent raised over £780 for Wheels.

A big thank you to Paul, and all those who sponsored him! If you'd like to help more disabled people have the hope of a better future, we have lots of ideas on our [fundraising pages](#) or do email us to discuss any ideas you might have.



Paul on the way down, raising funds for Wheels (photo by Sam Goodridge)



Reninca will be staying in touch with the work - all trips are ready to go!

Congratulations!

Our International Missions Manager, Reninca, and her husband Carwyn, have been approved as potential adopters, and should have a child join their family in the coming months. Congratulations to them all! Reninca will be going on adoption leave, but she will still be coming into the office for 'keep in touch days' and continue to be the main contact for International Mission trips. She will then be returning to work part time, managing the trips and overseeing the work of the Aldershot Warehouse.

Thank You Philippa

Thank you to Philippa Lomas, who left her post as Through the Roof's Youth Ambassador in October. Philippa says, 'In December this year Will and I are expecting our first baby. We are very excited! So it is with a lot of prayer I have decided to leave Through the Roof and become a full-time Mum. Thank you all so much for your prayers and support throughout my time at Through The Roof! It's meant so much to me. I hope and pray for you all that God will guide you in all that you do.' All of us at TTR wish them much happiness! Thank you for all you've done over the past three and a half years.



Thank you Philippa

Best Practice Makes Perfect

We're pleased to announce that Through the Roof has been awarded the Short Term Mission Code of Best Practice by Christian missions agency, Global Connections. This is a system of accountability, checking the procedures we have in place for our international trips, and affirms our commitment to operating high-quality, effective missions.





Eileen interviews and assesses a client for a Wheelchair on one of her many Wheels trips

God Does More Than We Can Ever Imagine

Volunteer Eileen Orr shares some of the things she's learnt through fourteen years of Wheels for the World trips.

'We serve an amazing God. So many times I have seen just the right chair becoming available for the right person, even when I hadn't noticed that chair previously. I have seen just the right team member able to speak to a client about their own experience of disability. I have seen joy unspeakable when a child who had never walked before take their first faltering steps. I have also seen pastors cut to the heart when challenged about their non inclusion of people with disabilities in their churches. Anyone who has been on a Wheels trip will tell you that our God is able to do far more than we can ever imagine.'

We are unbelievably rich in the West, both in material and spiritual blessings, yet we squander both. In developing countries where our brothers and sisters don't know where their next meal is coming from, they trust God and share their meagre resources with us.

So many times as a team we have been overwhelmed by the needs before us and felt totally inadequate for the task. It's then, in our weakness that we've come to God in prayer and seen how God can use us in ways we never thought possible.

So, I encourage you to trust our great God at all times and when the unexpected happens, look for God in that situation. We need to hold lightly to the things of this world and treasure spiritual things, and when tough times come praise God for the good that is in your life.

Finally, you too can be a part of this amazing ministry whether through an active role, essential financial support, or the even more important role of prayer. It has been an immense privilege to work with so many amazing people both in the U.K. and our overseas partners.'



3 in 1 Good Deeds

In 2015, just one good deed will turn into three! We'll be producing course materials, and encouraging churches, schools and groups to sponsor a wheelchair. We'll show how your support saves a chair from the dump, helps a prisoner restore a chair to take part in meaningful work, and brings physical freedom to someone in a developing country. Three good deeds in one! If you would like to make sure that your church, school or group will be signed up to participate please visit www.3in1gooddeeds.org for more information. Just £40 can change someone's life through the gift of a wheelchair.

◀ Get signed up to '3 in 1 Good Deeds' and see your support help three times

Hold a Special Day

Fundraising for Through the Roof is easy and great fun. To help budding volunteers, we've produced a fundraising pack containing inspiring ideas, and easy steps for holding events for friends and churches. The pack contains details of running dress-down days, special challenges, pamper days, schwapping parties, and more, as well as posters, logos and invites for you to use to promote your event. They're all available for download from www.throughtheroof.org/fundraising/ or by contacting the office. We'd love to help you have a great time and support TTR all in one day!

Check your Account

We've recently discovered that a few generous donors have sent cheques directly to our bank, rather than the office. All donations have been paid in, but it leaves us without enough information to thank people or claim gift-aid. Please do send any cheques or gifts to us at the office at **PO Box 353, Epsom, Surrey, KT18 5WS**. Thank you!



You could sign up for a special challenge day, like Sarah and Carla in Belfast

You can make a difference!



Join with TTR to provide life-changing opportunities for disabled people, and equip others to do the same. Your support transforms lives.

Many families with autistic children feel excluded by people and judged because of their children's needs and behaviour. One of our projects gives families and individuals space where they feel "Accepted and Loved no Matter What", and time to relax and meet with others who understand.

Please donate using this form or www.justgiving.com/ttr.
Get in touch for other ways to give.

Visit www.throughtheroof.org
to find out more about our other life-changing work.

Through the roof



Through the Roof Charitable Trust Ltd. is a UK Registered Company number 04201510
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It is also a Registered Charity Number 1087788.

01372 749955 www.throughtheroof.org



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