

Forward

Midlothian

Disabled People

www.forwardmid.org.uk

Forward

Mid

Equality - Diversity - Inclusion



Do you Have your copy?

Forward Mid Launched there 2017 disabled persons directory in conjunction with Midlothian council disability planning for 2016 - 2019; on the 7th of February 2017 at an event held in the Dalkeith Welfare Hall, Saint Andrew street.

The event proved very popular and it was very well attended. In fact as the event started it ended up being standing room only.

The event started with a little Q and A from Jayne Lewis; Midlothian's Supporting people with physical disabilities officer. The Q and A was to highlight what is a physical disability and the disadvantages and obstacles they have to overcome. Jayne went on to highlight the points that both midlothian council face and disabled people. With new housing stock being developed with wider doors to allow access to all new housing by wheelchair users. Jayne also stated that new stock housing will be built so the if required at a later stage to be adapted for a disabled person to use it is easier to modify. Midlothian council now has a clearer path of what is required in Midlothian to allow disabled people to lead a more productive and inclusive life in Midlothian.

The event was attended by Colin Beattie MSP who addressed the audience with high praise and stated "Forward Mid directory produced is the first county in Scotland to produce a directory with this much information that will not only benefit physically disabled people in Midlothian but will benefit almost everyone." Read the whole letter page 2

Where can you pick up a copy?

All midlothian libraries, MVA office in Dalkeith. You can request a copy by writing to Eric Johnstone at 4-6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith EH 22 1AE, or Email eric.johnstone@mvacvs.org.uk or Phone 0131-663-9471

I prefer an Electronic copy?

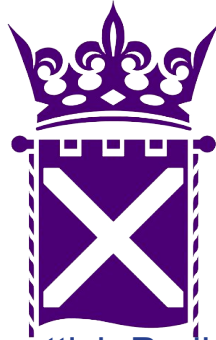
Then download it from www.forwardmid.org.uk/directorypage1a.html you will find two copies the smaller size is for phones and tablets.



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Letter from Colin Beattie



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid n h-Alba



Colin Beattie MSP
Midlothian North
& Musselburgh

08.02.17

Mr Jeff Adamson
Chair of Forward Mid
4-6 White Hart Street
Dalkeith EH22 1AE
Midlothian

Dear Jeff,

I am writing to you today to congratulate Forward Mid on the successful launch of its Disabled People's Directory 2017.

I was delighted to be in attendance of this event and was honoured at the opportunity to say a few words highlighting the importance of small local groups such as yours. I was very impressed with the contents of the new directory and feel that it will be instrumental in helping the Disabled residents of Midlothian feel confident and empowered moving forward in their lives. Forward Mid has done a wonderful job raising public awareness of the challenges and opportunities that face those with disabilities, and I am confident that they will continue to provide excellent services in the future. I look forward to seeing all the good that will be achieved in Midlothian Because of this new directory.

To recognise this achievement and the incredible service performed by your organisation, I have submitted the motion overleaf to Parliament. I hope it will be strongly supported by my Fellow MSPs.

Colin Beattie MSP
Midlothian North & Musselburgh

Colin Beattie,
Constituency Office, 164 High Street Dalkeith, EH22 1AY, Tel:  0131 454 0204

Motion Number: S5M-03926

Date Lodged: 08/02/2017

Title: Forward Mid's Directory for Disabled people 2017

Motion Text: That the Parliament congratulates Forward Mid on its significant contribution in raising awareness and opportunities for disabled people in Midlothian; Welcomes the launch of its Directory for Disabled People 2017, which aims to provide useful and up-to-date information, tips and contact information; believes that this be of value to people seeking access to services in the area, and wishes Forward Mid success with this and its other endeavours.

Priority Register for Electricity

If you have a disability make sure you register that disability with your electricity supplier, once on the Priority Service Register and you have a power outage you should call your network operator. Cordless phones will not work as they require power to connect the phone to the land-line. From a mobile phone call your network operator or the emergency number 105.

Who is my electricity network operator?

105 will put you through to your local network operator. If you want to find out who your network operator is, use the postcode finder below. This tool will also tell you how you can contact your network operator via their website or on social media, where these channels are available.

I'm on the priority services register. Should I now call 105?

The Priority Services Register is for people who might need extra support during a power outage; for example, people who need electricity for vital medical equipment. This is to give priority response

If you are on the Register and you have a power outage, you should continue to call the phone number that you have been given by your service provider.

The priority register is people with:

- Has a disability;
- Has a chronic illness;
- Is of pensionable age;
- Is blind or partially sighted;
- Is deaf or hard of hearing;
- Has another type of special need.



What should I do during a power cut?

Switch off all electrical appliances that shouldn't be left unattended, ready for when the power comes back on.

Leave a light on so you know when the power outage has been resolved.

Check to see if your neighbours are okay.

Wrap up warm.

Contact your network operator to report the power cut, either by calling 105 or via their other available channels.

What should I do if I see a damaged overhead electricity line or substation?

Call 105 immediately to report the problem to your network operator. Keep as far away from the hazard as possible. If there is a serious immediate risk (e.g. Cables obstructing a public highway), call the emergency services too. Or visit www.powercut105.com/

How can I prepare for a power cut?

- Keep a torch handy – it's much safer than using candles.
- Get a battery-powered or wind-up radio (useful for keeping up to date with relevant local news).
- Keep warm – keep a blanket and warm clothing handy, and fill a vacuum flask or hot water bottle.
- Stock your cupboard with food and drink that doesn't require electricity to prepare it.
- Keep your mobile phone and laptop fully charged. The router hotspots outwith the house will still operate
- Check your network operator's website or social media channels for updates.

Thanks to Ian Calder for this information.

Midlothian Voluntary Action Peer Support Start Up Fund



Have you ever thought that it would be good to meet other people with a similar interest, hobby or health condition for a bit of support, a chance for a blether or to have a space just to get together? Midlothian Voluntary Action, Midlothian Council and a few other partners are working together to offer small start-up grants to individuals or groups with ideas to bring people together in common activity or connection within local communities in Midlothian.

Maybe you've needed someone to talk to, but didn't know where to go, had an idea for a learning experience, or wanted to try something new and thought there must be other people in the same boat! What could make life richer for you and others? We're looking for ideas that help people feel more connected, less isolated, maybe help develop some skills. Basically whatever your idea is, we hope that it will contribute towards people's health and well being.

This is a chance to explore your idea.

The small grant could help get you started.

The list below tells you the "musts" for applying for a grant.

- The project/group/individual receiving the grant must operate in Midlothian.
- The purpose of the grant must include, involve and benefit people in Midlothian.
- Each application must include a named person who takes responsibility for receiving and securely keeping funds.
- All receipts and invoices must be returned to the Peers Support Panel by the named person.
- The rest is up to you.

If you would like to discuss the application, or have an idea you would like to explore, please feel free to get in touch, details below.

George Wilson

Manager

Midlothian Voluntary Action

4-6 White Hart Street

Dalkeith

EH22 1DA

Tel:  0131 663 9471

Email: info@mvacvs.org.uk



Self-Directed Support (SDS) is the way that all Social Care Is now delivered. SDS gives people greater choice and control over the way they want their care and support needs met. People can choose one of four options:

Option 1 – you receive a direct payment to purchase support yourself.

Option 2 – you can ask a third party to manage your budget for you.

Option 3 – the local council arranges your support for you.

Option 4 – a mixture of the above options.

Here are four examples of people using Option 1 to employ their own personal assistants.

Self Directed Support Case studies

Linda's story – getting a life back.

Linda is a 51 year old lady who lives with her husband, Bob. She worked in full time employment until October when she had to stop working due to her health issues.

Linda suffers from Multiple Sclerosis and requires a high level of support. She had received 22 hours of support from the traditional home care services and was also given two day place in a day service. These arrangements did not work well for her or Bob.

Now, Linda manages her own budget and employs her own Personal Assistants to support her on a daily basis to meet her social care needs. Having a SDS budget not only means that Linda can receive the services to meet her needs in a more flexible way, but it also means that she can have greater control of her life. The cost of the support package Linda put in place herself was also lower than the cost of her previous services provided.

Linda remembers the day she opted to direct her own support as the day she got her life back:

On the first day I took control of my own budget, I celebrated by doing lots of things like going out for lunch and doing some shopping. All that was possible because I had my PA with me to help. I know these are pretty ordinary things to do, but I can't convey what joy they brought me. I literally felt as though I had my life back. When I was receiving standard home care it was like being a prisoner in my own home. I can't go anywhere without a carer, and they couldn't take me outside my own four walls.

The worst part of the old system was that they treated Bob as a non-person. The carers would come in to make my lunch but they weren't allowed to cook for Bob. I had to be ready for bed at 8.00 pm because that was the latest the carers would call. Sometimes it made me want to cry. They would come in through the door and shout out cheerily: "Time to be in your jim-jams" It didn't matter if I was in the middle of a meal or entertaining friends. I had to drop what I was doing because I can't get ready for bed on my own.

I have only been on self-directed support for a couple of months, and already those days are like a distant memory. I am sure this will be a generational thing in that children growing up now will find it hard to believe that care regimes were so rigid and impersonal.

The difference is absolutely amazing. And of course it was great for Bob because he was free to do whatever he wanted without worrying about me. Thanks to self-directed support I've got people I know and like coming into help me, and they do it on my terms because their payments come through me as I now control my own budget. I don't go to bed till 10.30 pm and they will even help me take Mandy our Labrador for a walk, or they will take her out if we can't for any reason. It's just such a delight. I wish I could have done it years ago.

I am definitely living a much fuller life thanks to the independence and confidence that having my own budget has given me. I still love swimming, but I have also taken up tai chi, going to the athletics track, and boccia.



Alana's story – a new level of freedom.

Alana initially employed a Personal Assistant using Self-directed Support to help her attend college. After college she took independent advice to help her get the most out of her funding.

Changes

Alana's PA is now able to drive her car and this means she has a whole new level of freedom and is able to get out and socialise.

"I'm now able to go shopping for food and clothes, I can have nights in with friends, I can go to the cinema, concerts and even football matches.

SDS has meant I am less reliant on my parents and more independent. It's a huge help that anything I do is now in my own time, and on my own terms, there are no time limits any more. SDS has opened so many doors for me, allowing me to become more independent and giving me so much more confidence".

Fraser's story – security and independence.

Fraser has muscular dystrophy and uses a wheelchair. His parents cared for him on their own without any extended family support. Through Self-directed Support the family have hired personal assistants.

Changes

This has changed Fraser's life giving him security and an independence that has allowed him to have experiences that would not have been possible before. Through a centre he attends, he met Paul, a peer who has the same condition and is also in receipt of SDS funding. The boys asked to combine their resources and have a weekend away - parent free! Each took a PA meaning 2 PA's available for assisting with moving. The boys had a fantastic weekend away in Amsterdam, without SDS this would not have been possible.

Fraser can now enjoy socialising like everyone else, going out to cafés as he has his PA to assist him.

Fraser's mum says there will still always be good and bad days, but SDS has transformed their lives and they are over the moon with the outcomes for Fraser.



Fiona's story – feeling human again.

Prior to receiving support / Self-directed Support, Fiona had a very limited quality of life. Unable to dress herself properly she attended meetings locally with no socks or shoes on, hoping there would be someone there to help her with it when she arrived. After a stay in hospital she was assessed and given Self-directed Support.

Changes

Fiona feels her life has resumed and it no longer feels fruitless. Her house is tidy, she can cook proper meals again and she has simple daily choices others take for granted that allow her to feel like a human being again. She is able to have support when it best suits her needs: to shower, dress and just live life.

She has a comfortable wheelchair and her carer can move her feet as often as she needs it.


You can find out more Self-Directed Support in our February 2016 newsletter at:
www.forwardmid.org.uk/newsletters2016_feb.html

Midcare Alarm and Telecare Service

Midlothian Council have increased the charges for the Midcare Alarm and Telecare Service, These changes come in effect on the 1st April 2017.

Midlothian council approved a raise from £3.00 to £3.15 per week. As we are billed in 13 week sections this will show on your bill as £40.95 an increase of £1.95.

Midlothian council claim this charge is considerably less than other local authorities and state they are continuing to reinvest in this service.

If you have queries please do not hesitate to call Midlothian council Primary Care & older people's services on  0131 271 3900.



Community Care Charges – Local democracy in practice

The Consultation

In the autumn of 2016 Midlothian Council launched a consultation called; Shaping Our Future – Choices for Change. The consultation ended on 7 November 2016.

Shaping Our Future Choices For Change



Midlothian

It's time to have your say!

The introduction to the consultation document said:

“At Midlothian Council, we need to make big changes to the way we work. We need to cut costs and change our services to make sure that we are able to deal with the future demands of a growing and ageing population.

As a result of government funding cuts, our budget gap in 2017/18 is expected to be more than £5.9 million. This will increase in future years and by 2020/21 it is estimated that it will be in the region of £23.8 million.

We need to make some tough choices and we want you to have your say.

These are not proposals which the council has fully considered or agreed on. They are options which we would like your views on before councillors take any key decisions on future spending.

Our aim is to make sure that we spend money on the right areas and on those who need our services most.”

The introduction was followed by a range of options on services the council provides for people to consider and comment on.

In this article we are concentrating on the Health and Social Care section.

The introduction to this particular section stated that; “the social care budget will be reduced by

£1.5 million in 2017-18. This will be achieved by reducing the cost of individual care packages. We will do this by changing how we meet individuals' needs. For example, people who receive overnight care may manage instead with 'telehealthcare' – new technology used to monitor personal safety.

Any changes to individual care packages will only be made following discussion with service users and their families.”

These are the choices people were given to rate and comment on if.

Choices For Change		Health and Social Care				
What We Could Do	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Strong Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
B.1 Reduce the demand on social care by developing preventative approaches within communities, to support people to live independently for as long as possible.						
B2. Work with integrated joint board to improve Reablement and recovery services through greater use of technology, to support people to live independently.						
B3. Increase charges for personal care and housing support.						
B4. Introduce charges for transport to day centres and day services.						

This section of the consultation paper ended with a statement on what the consequences might be.

“People who use community based services could be asked to manage with fewer days or **less support**. This would help reduce staffing and transport costs but may **put further pressure on families** or increase the demand for council care at home services. There could also be a reduced level of support for people to deal with their addiction problems.

The Integration Joint Board will need to very carefully consider the impact of the service reductions listed above. Some reductions may well lead to a rise in costs elsewhere - e.g. Reducing day services may lead to more expensive care at home services. **These reductions may leave vulnerable people at risk. They may also have a particular impact on people who are already struggling as a result of living with long term health conditions and trying to manage on a low income.**

The consultation results.

Q1: Reduce the demand on social care by developing preventative approaches within communities, to support people to live independently for as long as possible.

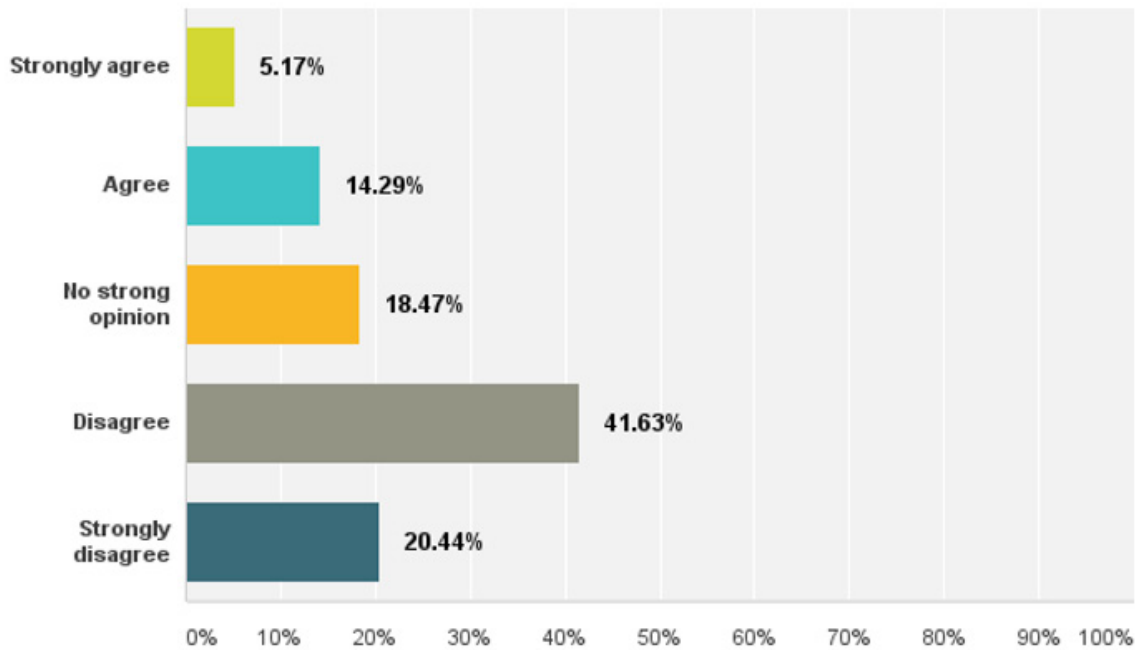
There was an overwhelming consensus that this be implemented with 83.90% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing to it.

Q9: Work with the Integrated Joint Board to improve reablement and recovery services through greater use of technology, to support people to live independently.

Again, a sizeable amount of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that this be implemented –75.86%.

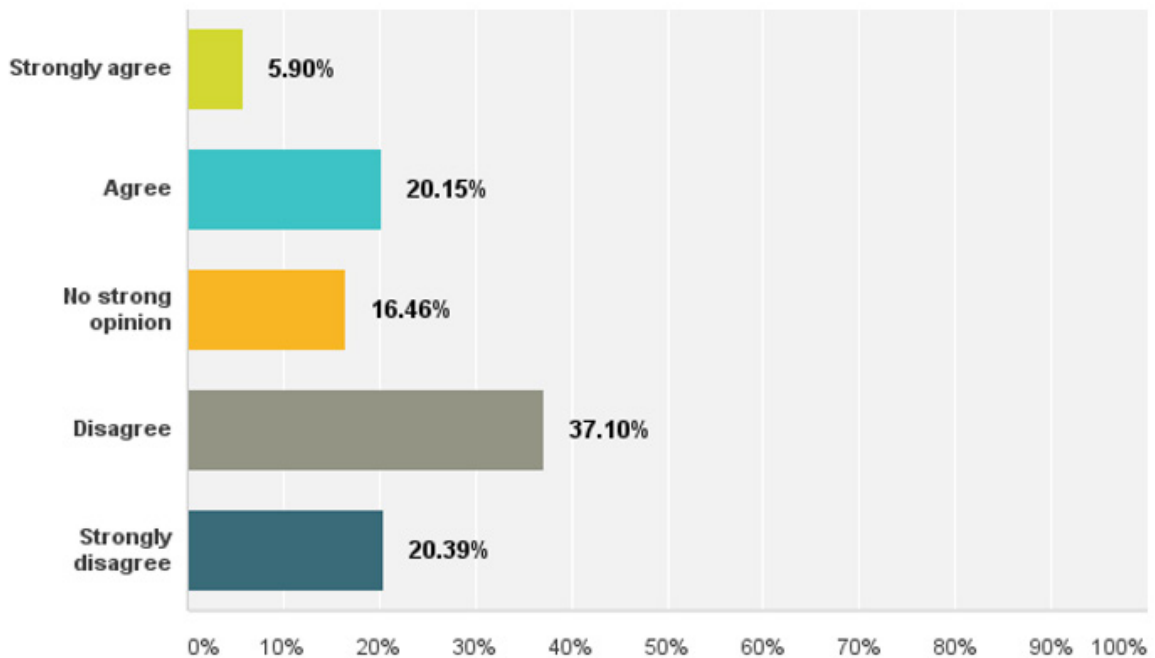
Q10: Increase charges for personal care and housing support.

As you can see, this option was only supported by 14.9% of respondents.



Q11: Introduce charges for transport to day centres and day services.

In this case, only 26.05% of respondents agreed that this should be implemented.



Implementation of consultation responses.

At its meeting held on 20 December 2016 Midlothian Council considered the findings of this consultation, specifically on the issue of financial savings. Here are the details of the changes to Health & Social Care charging that the council agreed to.

Adult social care					
Description of charge	Last increase	Current Charge	Increase %	Rounded amount	Proposed start date
Homecare charges per hour	July-16	£10.28	5%	£10.80	April-17
Housing support the per hour	July-16	£10.28	5%	£10.80	April-17
Telecare and Community Alarms (per week)	July-16	£3.00	5%	£3.15	April-17
Day Centre Meals (Cherry Road/ CAT)	July-16	£2.15	7%	£2.30	April-17
Care home charges	July-16	£0.00	n/a	n/a	April-17
Day Centre Charges (Highbank - meals, per day)	July-16	£4.35	-15.00%	£3.50	April-17
Transport - Highbank	New	£3.50	0.00%	£3.50	April-17
Transport -all other (per journey)	New	£0.00	0.00%	£1.00	April-17
Adult day centre (per day)	New	£0.00	0.00%	£3.00	April-17

Conclusion.

On Midlothian Council's budget for 2017-18 Midlothian Council leader Cath Johnston commented:

“Faced with the need to make these budget savings, we have focused our efforts on ensuring that the most vulnerable in our communities are protected. I am delighted that there will be additional funding for our schools and for health and social care, and that we will continue to invest in initiatives to keep our communities safe.”

Here are some questions you may want to ask yourself, your family and friends and, importantly, those canvassing for votes in the upcoming local elections.

Have Midlothian councillors considered the public's views in this consultation before making these key decisions?

- If they have, why have they gone against public opinion by increasing social care charges by 5% for the second consecutive year and introducing charges for services which were previously free?
- Have Midlothian Council listened to their own warnings that people who use community based services could; have less support; put further pressure on families; leave vulnerable people at risk; and that increasing community care charges will have a particular impact on people who are already struggling?
- Have the Council achieved their aim in spending money "on those who need our services most"?
- Is Councillor Johnston correct in saying that Midlothian Council has focused their efforts on “ensuring the most vulnerable in our communities are protected”?

You can read the full Shaping Our Future – Choices for Change consultation and results by following this link:

https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/591/your_council/384/shaping_our_future/2

DOSH AND NOSH




The participants receiving their course certificates.

Local Area Coordination in Midlothian work alongside children and adults (up to 64 years) with learning disability; physical disability; sensory impairment; and their families. The team recently ran a pilot course for six weeks which introduced basic budgeting and cooking skills to individuals who either had their own tenancy or were planning to in the future.

The activities were developed after discussions with partner agencies within Midlothian. The course covered topics such as 'Making Choices about our Money', learning about coins and notes and giving change, planning shopping, kitchen hygiene and planning and cooking a simple meal. We all contributed towards and enjoyed a meal together at the last session. The group members also worked on individual goals during the six weeks.

Feedback received from the evaluations included:

- 'Have been saving for a holiday'
- (Would like) "Help with maths and English"
- "Help with coins and notes"

We are hoping to run further courses in the future. If this is something you feel you would be interested in, please get in touch with the Local Area Coordinators on  0131 454 1785



What are Forward Mid Up To?

Maybe you're wondering what we do, what we're up to..

Maybe you want to get involved...

In the last months we have;

- Completed and Published the 2017 Directory for Disabled People – 144 page resource to support disabled people to lead better lives.
- We completed and Published a transport Guide 2017 for People in Midlothian –Every transport option we know of – in one place.
- We've had active involvement in Scotland Against the Care Tax – fighting for the rights of Disabled People to not be discriminated against.
- We launched our new facebook page – check it out; www.facebook.com/forwardmid/
- We've ran three monthly café connects – monthly peer support cafés in Dalkeith with great conversation.
- We maintain our Community Library Hubs – local information access points in the libraries of Midlothian.

If you like the sound of being involved with us, a motivated, active, achieving group of fun people get in touch.



We meet weekly, informally usually over coffee in Wetherspoons, Blacksmith Forge, Dalkeith – You would be welcome. You may even enjoy it!



Alternative Publications

Please like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/forwardmid/



Forward Mid newsletters are available in large print on request from Eric Johnstone Tel: 0131-663-9471 or email eric.johnstone@mvacvs.org.uk write to him at MVA, 4-6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith, EH22 1AE with your request. Electronic copies can be found on www.forwardmid.org.uk. The latest Firefox browser has the reader symbol  in the address bar, click and select narrate from left menu. The latest Safari Browser has the reader symbol  but does not read aloud. These only work on websites without errors. If you require help please contact Forward Mid and we will arrange to help you.

Edited by Iain Tait for Forward Mid