



'Daily Mile Nation', with nurseries, colleges, universities and workplaces joining more than 800 primary schools and regularly taking part."

Wyllie said: "I founded the Daily Mile as I became concerned about the lack of physical fitness displayed by pupils and wanted to find a solution."

"The Daily Mile started with my simple belief that it would help children lead more active lives."

"I am delighted that this new research underlines what I found and I look forward to the day when every school does the Daily Mile."

Daily Mile founder Elaine Wyllie and the University of Stirling's Colin Moran with pupils from St Ninians Primary

Poor housing 'failing' disabled Scots, says report

BY KIRSTEEN PATERSON

TENS of thousands of people with disabilities in Scotland are being "failed" by inadequate housing, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has said.

A report released today claims 61,000 Scots with disabilities are awaiting adaptations to their homes, with another 15,000 said to be "poorly housed".

The UK-wide study found 365,000 disabled people have reported that their homes are not suitable for their needs. The organisations says some are left trapped inside due to accessibility problems that can also have a serious impact on family life.

John Wilkes, head of EHRC Scotland, said: "We heard many stories of people unable to leave their homes, restricted to eating, sleeping and bathing in one room, and loved ones risking their own health to carry family members upstairs or between rooms."

"The effect of this cannot be understated. It impacts on every aspect of a disabled person's life, their ability to participate in family life, to work, to access education and social life, as well as their dignity, health and well-being."

He went on: "Scotland is currently building 50,000 affordable homes. We could resolve the problem for all of Scotland's wheelchair users now if these houses were built to accessible standards."

The inquiry also found that disabled people living in inaccessible houses were four-times less likely to be in work than those in adequate accommodation. The EHRC says the current system for installing simple adaptations like handrails and hoists "isn't working", despite the "huge differences" the steps could make to the quality of life for residents.

The report blames poor planning for part of this, with only one quarter of Scottish councils saying they hold accurate information about disabled people's housing needs today.

Wilkes said: "We estimate that demand for wheelchair accessible



EHRC Scotland chief John Wilkes

homes will rise by 80 per cent in the next five years. It's four-times cheaper to build an accessible house than to retro fit adaptations. Building accessible housing is also far cheaper than keeping people in care homes or hospitals as we do just now because there is nowhere for them to live."

Housing Minister Kevin Stewart said: "We are working with health and social care partnerships, disability organisations, and the housing sector to ensure those in need of any adaptations to their home can access those services as and when they need them."

"And are also currently refreshing the local housing strategy guidance to make sure realistic targets are set at local level for the supply of wheelchair housing reflecting local needs and priorities."

However, commenting on the UK-wide findings, Neil Heslop, chief executive of disability charity Leonard Cheshire, said: "This report is a shocking indictment of how disabled people have largely been forgotten in the housing priorities of local and national government."

And Terrie Alafat, chief executive of the Chartered Institute of Housing, said: "We have to build a significant number of new homes, but we have to make sure they are the right homes, in the right places and that people can afford them."

Ex-MPs off on African business safari

A RESEARCH and consultancy network set up by two former MPs is taking them on an African adventure helping entrepreneurs.

Roger Mullin and Michelle Thomson – who now run Momentous Change – have been appointed to the advisory board of the African Entrepreneurship Network, which is based in Kenya.

It is chaired by Kenyan businessman Manu Chandaria, who built up his multimillion-pound international empire – employing more than 30,000 people – from a small shop in Nairobi.

Mullin and Thomson launched Momentous Change with the report Brexit and Scottish Business, which was first reported in The National.

Since then it has struck several deals for research and consultancy work in Scotland and London but has also seen very early engagement in international work.

"We are delighted to be joining the advisory team chaired by the renowned international businessman and philanthropist Dr Manu Chandaria," said Mullin.

"Before becoming a Member of Parliament I had undertaken around 18 assignments in Africa and am excited at supporting a new venture aimed at encouraging social entrepreneurship, particularly amongst young and often marginalised Africans."

Thomson added: "I have already agreed to be a mentor for some of the girls and young women involved in the network."

"Throughout my business career I always mentored young women seeking to progress in business; something I am passionate about. This is a great opportunity for Momentous Change to make a real contribution to development."

Two arrests in £12m 'VAT fraud' swoop

TWO men were arrested in Glasgow yesterday as part of an HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) probe into a suspected £12 million VAT fraud.

The two, aged 60 and 45, were

arrested on suspicion of VAT evasion.

Several items including mobile phones, laptops and computers were seized.

Joe Hendry, of HMRC's fraud investigation service, said: "VAT fraud is not a victimless crime; it deprives us all of money that should be funding public services."



Hundreds turn out to support refugees

HUNDREDS of people took to the streets of Edinburgh last night to stand in solidarity with refugees who have made Scotland their home.

The demonstration was organised

after Syrian refugee Shabaz Ali was the victim of an allegedly racially aggravated murder attempt at a hostel in the city's Fountainbridge.

Green MSP Andy Wightman raised the matter at First Minister's Questions. Nicola Sturgeon said: "Scotland must stand united at all times against all forms of racism and all forms of hate crime."