



changing**LIVES**:



Fiona Neale

Paralympic Swimming

Fiona is a Paralympic silver medallist. At the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games she set a new Paralympic Record in the 100m backstroke heats and went on to win a silver medal in the final, setting a new European Record in the process. She also broke the British record in the 400m freestyle coming fifth overall. Fiona also won individual medals at 2 European Games, and at the 1998 World Championships in New Zealand. During her 5 year swimming career Fiona won over 50 National Championship medals, set numerous British Records (ten of which still stand). She also broke the World Short Course Record for 200m backstroke.

Previously Fiona had had a promising career as a wheelchair racer. She won the Dublin Marathon in 1996 and came 3rd in the London Marathon in 1998. Twice Fiona was voted Leicestershire Sports Person of the Year and she was the first disabled person in the country to be awarded a Sports Scholarship at a University.

Fiona grew up struggling with dyslexia and being bullied at school. She has a rare condition that means her joints dislocate easily. A road traffic accident, fourteen years ago, left Fiona having to use a wheelchair.

Her silver medal in the Sydney Paralympic Games was the fulfilment of a childhood dream, something she had been told would be impossible for her to achieve.

