Recruitment Information Pack

Sense Scotland

Sense Scotland works with children and adults who have complex communication support needs because of deafblindness, sensory impairment, learning or physical disability. One of our key areas of expertise is communication. Working closely with people, often on a one-to-one basis, we aim to find out what their aspirations are and how they want to live their lives.

The organisation was set up in the mid-1970s by a small group of parents of deafblind children who came together to offer mutual support and to press for the development of services. Sense Scotland was formalised in 1985 with the appointment of its first paid member of staff. It became a company with charitable purposes limited by guarantee in Scotland in 1993 and now has many years of experience in providing individually tailored services.

Families are at the heart of Sense Scotland today and our core values stem from working jointly with them over the years. It's important that we all sign up to these values when we begin to work with the organisation.

We currently have 1,000 staff and over 100 volunteers.

Special points of interest:

- Established in 1985.
- Employing over 1000 staff.
- Services throughout Scotland.
- Excellent training and development opportunities.
- SQA Approved Centre

Inside this issue:

Services we provide	2
Where we work	3
Training & Development	4
Stories from our services	5
Contact details	8

Core Values

We are committed to working to our core values and working principles. Derived from families, these enshrine the organisation's ethos and guide the actions of all staff.

Sense Scotland's values in practice mean we will:

- Be open and honest: we will be truthful and won't mean to mislead you.
- Recognise individual worth: you are important and what you say is worth listening to.
- Build relationships through trust: we will work to gain your trust by listening to what you say, by being truthful and by doing what we said we'd do when we said we'd do it.
- Act on the basis of individual aspirations and needs: we will respond to you as an individual and will not assume we know and understand about your wishes and needs before we learn about them.
- Be accountable: each of us is responsible for our actions and they will not work against what we agreed and will not work to your disadvantage.

Working Principles

Working principles support our values in service provision where we will:

- Respect and protect dignity.
- Work in a way that provides as much privacy as possible.
- Safeguard rights, safety and welfare.
- Encourage as much choice as possible.
- Enhance independence by supporting people to do as many things for themselves as possible.
- Help people to realise personal fulfilment and make the most of opportunity.
- Provide opportunities for learning and having fun.
- Acknowledge the value of risk taking by assessing risk in such a way that does not stop people trying new things.

Our Aims

- Provide a range of quality services which support and empower people to enhance their lives.
- Promote change and improvement in legislation, regulations and central and local government policies.
- Advance public awareness
- Improve professional knowledge and skills.
- Work to limit the spread of rubella in the community.
- Operate an efficient and effective organisation.

The Services We Provide

"You will need to be open to new and exciting experiences and maybe a little adventurous too"

Sense Scotland offer both children and adult services, and there are a number of exciting opportunities in both. We also have a strong core services team for finance, HR, IT and administration. Our highly successful fundraising team is based in Glasgow and we have charity shops across Scotland.

Our support services include:

- **Housing Support Services**. These are services that support people to meet their responsibilities in maintaining their own tenancy.
- **Care at Home**. These services provide support to people staying in their own homes. In practice Care at Home and Housing Support Services are often combined, providing up to 24 hour support.
- **Support Services**. These include day resource bases; community links services and enabler services. Services are individually tailored to meet people's needs and are important parts of community living and providing support when people need it, including days, evenings and weekends.
- **Short Breaks and Respite**. These services aim to provide flexible support to families giving them a break at the same time as offering a full programme of activities for the service user.

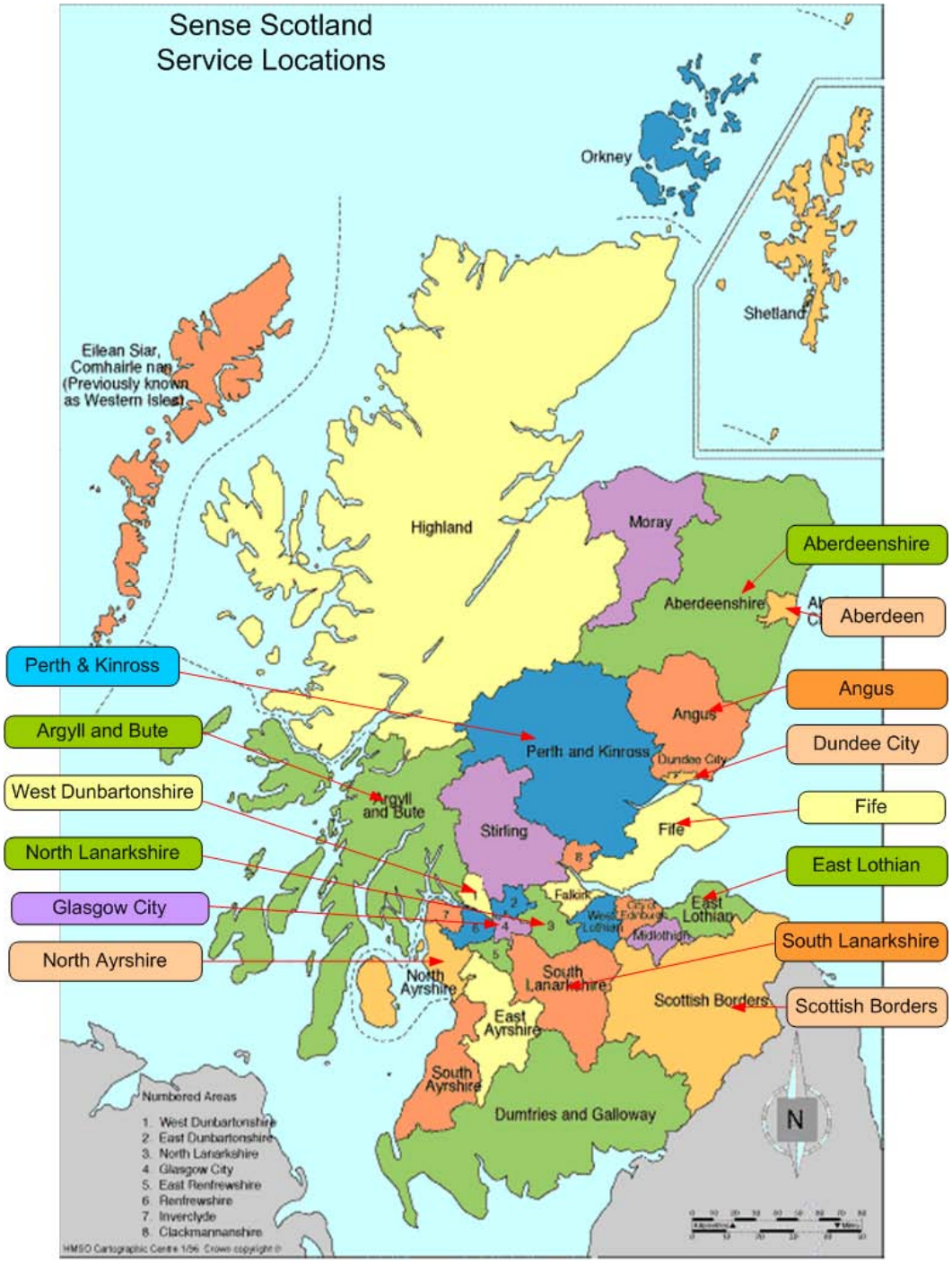
The people who use our services take part in a great number of activities. These include college, hydrotherapy, swimming, line dancing, wall climbing, shopping, hill walking, to name a few.

If you are interested in working for Sense Scotland you need to be open to new and exciting experiences and maybe a little adventurous too.

Where We Work

We have services across our operational regions as follows:

- East Region: Dundee, Fife, Perth & Kinross, East Lothian
- North East Region: Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus
- West Region: North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, Glasgow, North Ayrshire
- Children & Families Services: Glasgow, Argyll and Bute, West Dunbartonshire
- Shops: We have shops throughout Scotland. See our website for further details.



Your Training and Development

All staff are issued with a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) portfolio.

> **"We have seen people obtain SVQ level 3 and a variety of recognized qualifications. It has been a brilliant achievement"**

Where we can, we support staff on a wide range of training opportunities from short course to appropriate professional qualifications.

You will be part of a team and be well-supported and regular performance reviews are in place.

The Training and Learning Centre (TLC)

The Training and Learning Centre supports the delivery of staff training and professional development opportunities across all services. Our staff need a range of skills to meet the requirements of the post and to meet standards laid out be the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and other professional bodies.

TLC is here to help you develop in your career. We do this in a number of ways:

- We are approved by the Scottish Qualifications Authority to deliver Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs).
- We have developed work-placement learning opportunities for service users which will enable them to access SVQs, core skills and other recognised qualifications.
- We oversee induction training for all staff, along with the provision of CPD portfolios.
- We run a professional development programme for staff in a range of health, safety and core practice skills as well as more advanced, specialist courses for more experienced practitioners.
- Competency based training workbooks and support from experienced practitioner coaches.
- We co-ordinate placement opportunities for university and college students studying Social Work, Health and Social Care and Nursing.

SQA Approved Centre

- We support more experienced staff to develop their skills as work-based coaches and trainers.
- We provide training to other agencies in Scotland who wish to make use of our professional development programme.

What we expect from you:

- To fulfil the responsibilities of your contract and job description.
- To work hard and to the best of your ability.
- To uphold the organisation's values.
- To take responsibility for your professional development and to participate in training events.

Sense Scotland staff and volunteers are recognised for their achievements at the Staff Awards Ceremony in 2010.

My Sense Scotland

Roisin is 19 and our Children and Families services got to know her 6 weeks before she left school and started coming to TouchBase in summer 2008. This was a worrying time for her family but Roisin is now very happy to be here. Roisin needs support with communication. She finds change very difficult and can become extremely upset about it so staff need to make sure they communicate with her in a clear and consistent way. Roisin is now very interested in growing plants and flowers.

Roisin's mum talked about the support she gets:

"We were really apprehensive when she was first coming here…but she has never looked back. She stands at the window every morning waiting on the taxi; she talks about what she has done during the day. So because she's a lot happier the house is lot happier. It's been great, first class"

Amir at Belladrum

Last summer Amir, who we support to live in his own home in Glasgow, went to the Belladrum Festival (near Inverness) along with support workers Shaun and Linda. Shaun shares their story:

After we arrived we walked around the stalls, followed by a visit to the barn dance, where people were crammed into the tent dancing and singing folk songs. It wasn't long before Amir joined in.

The next morning we decided to take part in some cup recycling and painting before going to see bands including some Scottish folk groups and the large orchestra band, Orchestra Del Sol, where we danced and took part in a 400-person conga.

The Scouting for Girls show was really crowded which made it a bit difficult for Amir but he was fine with reassurance. On our last day we watched the Cold War Kids and ended the night at the mobile disco, before heading to bed. Amir told us that he had a great time and, in his words, *"the best holiday ever."*

North East African Music Project

Summer 2008 saw African music come to Aberdeen and Ellon. Fiona Sharp, music tutor for the North-East, and Gameli Tordzro, Artistic Director of Pan African Arts Scotland, ran weekly music sessions using authentic African instruments and singing songs from Ghana. Fiona said:

"The project has allowed people to develop their communication through rhythm and drumming and enhanced their enjoyment in percussive playing."

Kurtis Goes Off-Road

Our Go For It project secured funds from the Cross Trust and Zurich to purchase a cross-country wheelchair. Kurtis from Children and Families tried it first at Pollok Park, where we used the mountain bike track to put the chair through its paces.

"The best bit was when we went in the mud," enthused Kurtis. *"It went faster than my usual chair and I liked chasing around in it."*

My Sense Scotland

Raymond is in his mid sixties. He lived in a long-stay hospital for many years but now has his own home in Perthshire which he is very proud of. Sense Scotland staff support him to take care of his house and to lead a full life in the community. Raymond is delighted to get out for walks with his father who visits regularly. He also likes trains and loves the swing seat in the garden, shouting 'swing' when he's enjoying it. Raymond needs support with learning and communication and with staff support, his formal language is now developing well. As his father was leaving recently, Raymond said 'goodbye'. This was an immense step forward for him and everyone was delighted and very moved.

Good Vibrations at TouchBase

We were delighted when Fiona Hyslop, MSP, Minister for Culture and External Affairs, agreed to launch our Good Vibrations event in June 2010.

The day of celebration marked the recognition of TouchBase as a "UNESCO Creative City" fully accessible arts and music venue as well as celebrating our 25th anniversary.

TouchBase was packed to the rafters with families, carers and other visitors who were entertained by a range of musicians who came together to celebrate, share and create music together through creative and vibrant activities.

The day culminated with a performance from surprise guests The Bluebells and a rousing rendition of Young at Heart.

"I found the Good Vibrations day really good, it had a really fun atmosphere and even though it was very busy I very much enjoyed talking to everyone I met as well as hearing the Bluebells perform. I'd like to take part in future events like it, especially music workshops" Lori Duncan.

My Sense Scotland

Peter is supported by community living services in Aberdeen. He uses sign language and needs help with learning and understanding. Sense Scotland has supported Peter to live on his own for the first time in 2005. Now living in a shared flat Peter's confidence has grown and he now gets involved in a range of community activities including football, boccia, drama and art classes. He has also been supported by Outdoor Activities Co-ordinator, Joe Gibson, to go on Nordic adventure holidays where he fearlessly took on skiing and sledging. Peter is also a member of the Service User Consultation Group.

Life Histories Project

Sense Scotland was awarded a Heritage Lottery grant to preserve the life stories of former residents of New Craigs Hospital in Inverness, who have moved into their own homes. Karrie Marshall, who is leading project, curated the *'In Our Own Voices...the process of story gathering'* exhibition at Inverness Museum and Art Gallery.

This included photos of activities, such as story-box making, memory journeys, drama and story groups, plus a selection of visual art by service users.

The project culminated in a major exhibition at the Centre for Health Science, Inverness in November 2009, followed by a Scottish tour.

My Life Is Not A Three Year Contract

Steph, who we support to live in her own home in the East of Scotland, was a contributor to a film highlighting the problems people face when their service is put through the re-tendering process. Premiered at the CCPS (Community Care Providers Scotland) conference it received a warm reception from an audience which was roughly half voluntary sector and half statutory sector.

The film was made to express the uncertainties and anxieties that the current approach to contracts and retendering is causing disabled service users and their families.

Steph, who is blind, talked about her experience of re-tendering:

"It was too much upset for myself, and families, and I just hope we don't have to go through the same thing again."

Produced by Sense Scotland, Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability, Community Care Providers, Glasgow Social Care Providers Forum, service users and families, the film can be viewed at: **www.mylifeisnota3yearcontract.org**

"It was too much upset for myself, and families, and I just hope we don't have to go through the same thing again"

To find out more about Sense Scotland contact:
Email: **recruitment @sensescotland.org.uk**
Visit: **www.sensescotland.org.uk**

Head Office, West Region and Children and Families services contact:
TouchBase
Sense Scotland
43 Middlesex Street
Glasgow
G41 1EE
Tel: 0141 429 0294
Fax: 0141 429 0295
Text: 0141 418 7170

North East Region contact:
The Gatehouse
Quarry Road
Northfield Industrial Estate
Aberdeen
AB16 5UU
Tel: 01224 695510
Fax: 01224 789945

East Region contact:
Sangobeg House
4 Francis Street
Dundee
DD3 8HH
Tel: 01382 883520
Fax: 01382 825727

Team of the Year 2010 — Auchtermuchty.

This publication is available in various formats on request.
Sense Scotland is a company limited by guarantee, registered in Scotland Number 147570, and a registered Scottish charity, Number SC022097.

Patron: The Duchess of Sutherland.
Honorary Patron: Mary, Dowager, Countess of Strathmore LLD DL

POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

SQA Approved Centre

Sense Scotland