

Care and Connect *for families*



September 2024 Issue #30



Welcome!

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Blantyre Short Breaks

Did you know that Blantyre Short Breaks, our respite service in Lanarkshire, now accepts guests from across the country? The service, which is based in a cosy, well-designed house in Blantyre, offers short holidays for people over 16 with communication support needs, and includes:

- Seven fully accessible bedrooms, three with private terrace
- Communal lounge and dining area, and a smaller lounge area with access to a games console and a sensory room
- Spacious, accessible garden where guests can socialise
- Excellent public transport links and access to vehicles for short trips

If you support someone who may benefit from Blantyre Short Breaks, please give the service a call on 01698 714 930 or email staylor@sensescotland.org.uk.

Paul Hart

In October, Paul Hart – our Head of Operational Support, Practice Development & Quality – will be retiring after over 35 years working at Sense Scotland. Our longest-serving staff member, Paul has worked with countless people we support over every region in Scotland, and his knowledge and expertise has had immeasurable influence on both Sense Scotland and communication support research over the decades.

To celebrate Paul's many years of service at Sense Scotland, we're looking to present him with a collection of memories, photos, videos, voice notes, messages and best wishes from the people we support and their families who have interacted with him over the years. If you would like to submit anything for this, please send them over to communications@sensescotland.org.uk.

Jennifer's Story

Our Summer Appeal has now landed, which tells the story of Jennifer, who is supported by our Arts team at TouchBase Glasgow. Jennifer's story is incredible, and demonstrates the power of music and art to heal and give hope. You can read a snippet of her story, written by Jennifer's Mum Crystal, below. You can also read the full story and donate to our Summer Appeal at sensescotland.org.uk/summer-appeal.

"There are days in your life you'll never forget – your wedding day, the birth of your child, the death of a loved one. For me, it's the day my daughter Jennifer found her voice.

Jennifer stopped speaking when she was 12. Having endured a lifetime of medical interventions related to her cerebral palsy and suffering trauma due to surgeries, it all finally got too much. She withdrew into herself and shut down. Through the whole of secondary school no-one heard her speak. Not once, not even a whisper. The only people she could speak to were me and her sister Chloe, but never if someone else was around.

Without Sense Scotland, Jennifer would still be trapped in silence. With the patience and perception of tutors from the Arts department, music has literally transformed her life, and I can't thank them enough."

Employee of the Year

Last month, we asked for your help in nominating our Employee of the Year – a Sense Scotland staff member who has gone above and beyond in providing excellent service. This year, we received more nominations in this category than ever before, and we are delighted to share with you the nominees and shortlisted candidates below. Stay tuned for next month's issue to find out who our Employee of the Year for 2024 will be!

Nominees

- Gillian Bell
- James Gow
- David McCluskey
- Chelsey Skivington
- Lynda Swan
- Witni Michael
- BM team
- Lauren Knight
- Annette Cowie
- Michelle Smith
- Belltrees team
- Shereen Ryan
- Julie MacLeod
- Ross Caldwell
- Angela Rolland
- Kathryn Rankin
- Lynn Fisher
- Holly Armstrong

- Kelly Hamilton

Shortlist

- Amy McMichael
- Nicola McQuillan
- David Stephen

Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) took place on Wednesday, 11 September. Members of the public were invited to join virtually if they wished. During the AGM, four new Trustees were elected, and two current Trustees whose terms had finished were re-elected:

- Angela Clements (Chair)
- Dr John Richards, MBE (Vice Chair)
- Suzanne Clark*
- Margaret Cooper**
- Laura-Ann Currie**
- Lady Susan Haughey
- Wendy Hinnie
- Rt. Hon. Adam Ingram
- Mark Reilly**
- David Russell
- Martha Shortreed
- Gary Simpson*
- Margaret Mary Wilson**

* Re-elected

** Elected

Our statutory accounts and Annual Review for 2023 – 24 were also approved at the AGM. Our accounts will be lodged with Companies House and, alongside our Annual Review, will be available on our website at www.sensescotland.org.uk/annual-review in the forthcoming days.

Fundraising Opportunities

Sense Scotland is a charity. Many of our services rely on funding from trusts, foundations and the public. We need to raise at least £1million every year. Can you, your family, friends or employer help? To find out more about our fundraising activities and opportunities, please sign up to our

fundraising newsletter at bit.ly/sense-scotland-fundraising, give the team a call on 0300 330 9292 or email us at fundraising@sensescotland.org.uk.

Forth Bridge Abseil

Take the plunge and tackle the Forth Bridge Abseil on Sunday, 13 October! Experience the thrill of a 165-foot freefall abseil from one of Scotland's most iconic landmarks. Whether you're a seasoned adventurer or a first-timer, this is your chance to conquer the bridge and help make a difference for the people we support.

If you're interested in signing up or want more information, contact Ellie in the Fundraising team at ellienicol@sensescotland.org.uk.

A Night at the Museum Ball

Tickets are still available for our glamorous 'A Night at the Museum' ball! Join us on Saturday, 16 November 2024 for an enchanting fundraising event in aid of Sense Scotland, set within the splendid surroundings of the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum.

Promising a night of opulence and elegance, the ball will commence with a drinks reception, sponsored by WoodWinters Wines & Whiskies, followed by a sumptuous three-course dinner, a number of guest speakers, and captivating Broadway-style entertainment.

Hosting the event this year will be Greg Summers, renowned TV and radio presenter. He will be joined by previous host Edward Reid – providing outstanding vocals and charming banter – alongside Broadway singer Sarah Galbraith and viral sensation The Vintage Explosion.

Guests have the option to select from Platinum, Gold, or Silver tables, each offering a different level of indulgence. Find out more and book your tickets at sensescotland.org.uk/masquerade-ball.

Light Up the Track

There are just ten weeks to go until five phenomenal charities light up the track at Knockhill Racing Circuit. Join Sense Scotland alongside My Name's5 Doddie Foundation, The Fire Fighters Charity, Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance and the RAF Benevolent Fund for an incredible St. Andrew's Day celebration like no other. There's something for everyone:

- The Tartan Saunter – a gentle saunter around the track
- The Tartan Dash – a competitive timed 6km running challenge
- LED Torchlight Parade – be part of the first LED parade and light up the track

Participants and spectators alike will enjoy a whole host of activities, alongside a medley of Scottish tunes performed by the fantastic Sing in the City choir. Every penny of your registration

fee will be equally divided among the five charities, including Sense Scotland. Find out more at bit.ly/sense-scotland-knockhill.

Upcoming Events

Twinkle Tots (Online) – Weekly on Tuesdays

Our weekly toddler group for children under five with additional support needs occurs weekly on Tuesdays from 10:30am – 11:30am. This offers a virtual opportunity for toddlers to get together, play and have fun. Book your free space at bit.ly/twinkle-tots-online.

Autumn Fundraiser – Saturday, 5 October – Whitlees Community Centre

Come along to our Autumn Fundraiser at Whitlees Community Centre in Ardrossan on Saturday, 5 October at 7pm and enjoy a disco, buffet, raffle and prizes! Tickets cost £10. Contact 01294 605617 to buy or for more info.

Boo Party – Friday, 18 October – Blackhill Bowling Club

Join TouchBase Dunbartonshire at their Halloween Party next month at Blackhill Bowling Club! Come along from 7pm* - dress-up optional. Tickets cost £5. RSVP to TouchBase Dunbartonshire on 0141 772 5588.

*Children allowed until 10pm.

Please let us know what you think of Care and Connect. Send your feedback to communications@sensescotland.org.uk.

You can find past issues at sensescotland.org.uk/care-and-connect.