

Care and Connect *for families*



September 2025 Issue #42



Welcome!

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- Read an important update regarding **voluntary redundancy**
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- Check out our **upcoming events**
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Letter to the First Minister

As part of the Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS), Sense Scotland has joined over 200 third sector health and social care leaders in signing a joint open letter to the First Minister calling for immediate steps to address the crisis threatening the sector.

The letter makes clear that without action now, the consequences of the crisis will be felt across society, from deepening inequalities to even greater pressure on the NHS and public services – with Scotland's most vulnerable individuals and families paying the price.

The letter makes four key asks of the Scottish Government:

- An immediate, substantial cash injection in the upcoming Spending Review, including full cost recovery for employer National Insurance increases
- A medium-term, fully-funded recovery plan for the sector, to address decades of underinvestment
- Multi-year funding agreements adjusted for inflation, to ensure stability for organisations
- A firm commitment to fully include the sector in planning and decision-making

You can read the full letter at www.ccpscotland.org.

Voluntary Redundancy

Earlier this month, you will have received a letter from Angela Bonomy, Chief Executive Officer of Sense Scotland, announcing that we have launched an offer of voluntary redundancy to a section of our staff, as part of our efforts to manage the financial challenges we face – in particular, the increase in employers' National Insurance contributions.

The staff affected work in our back-office teams including ICT; Finance; Administration; HR; Recruitment; Health, Safety & Environment; Communications; Charitable Services; Learning & Development; Fundraising; Operational Support; and the Senior Management Team.

The safety and wellbeing of the people we support is our priority. By losing posts in our back-office teams we can achieve savings whilst protecting our frontline care services.

The voluntary redundancy programme opened on 1 September 2025, and closes on 30 September 2025.

If you have any questions regarding this, please email info@sensescotland.org.uk.

Friends and Family Survey

Earlier this year, we asked friends and families of the people we support for their anonymous feedback on the quality of social care delivery in Sense Scotland. Thank you to everyone who responded – we received 93 responses.

Overall, friends and families were most satisfied with the dignity and respect with which their loved ones are treated by our staff – something which we were extremely pleased to read. In addition, friends and families were highly satisfied with their inclusion in important decisions about their loved ones' care and how well staff knew their loved ones.

Key issues highlighted by families and friends were in relation to invoicing, as well as communication between services and families and friends of the people we support, particularly in regards to daily diaries with information on what their loved one has been doing. Families and friends suggested that they would like to receive information about new staff members and any staff members who are leaving the service. They also suggested that there be an increase in training in specific areas (e.g. BSL, Makaton, and supporting dietary requirements), an increase in the number of drivers available, and a broader range of activities for their loved one to enjoy. In an attempt to alleviate these concerns, we intend to do the following:

- Work with our Finance team to improve our invoicing
- Reassure families that regular reviews of their loved ones are taking place and encourage families to be involved
- Provide staff with guidance to enhance the quality of daily diaries
- Ask our Learning and Development team to include a wider variety of training options within their annual training audit.

We plan to run the survey again next year to see if there are changes in satisfaction levels. Prior to this, we will explore how to make the survey more accessible to families and improve response rate.

Thank you again to everyone who submitted their feedback.

Staff and Volunteer Awards 2025

Our Staff and Volunteer Awards 2025 will take place on Thursday, 2 October 2025 – and we're excited to share with you the shortlisted nominees in each category.

Big Idea

An individual or team that has demonstrated outstanding innovation - developing new ways of working to benefit the people we support or the organisation.

- Learning Hub
- TouchBase Ayrshire
- TouchBase Lanarkshire

Volunteer of the Year

An individual who has shown commitment and dedication - positively impacting the lives of people we support, their families and staff.

- Douglas Donaldson
- Margaret Ramsey

Inspiration (Operations)

An individual who has inspired and motivated others through enthusiasm, passion and perseverance - making a significant contribution to their workplace.

- Julie Macleod
- Laura Black
- Malgorzata Dutkiewicz-Pluta
- Paula Celi Hernandez

Inspiration (Non-Operations)

An individual who has inspired and motivated others through enthusiasm, passion and perseverance - making a significant contribution to their workplace.

- Liam Gorman
- Rebecca Scott
- Sarah Wroe

Team of the Year (Operations)

A team that has worked together to deliver high-quality services and achieve positive outcomes for the people we support or the organisation.

- Fife Housing Support
- Supported Living Glasgow 1
- Supported Living Glasgow 2
- West Dunbartonshire Services

Team of the Year (Non-Operations)

A team that has worked together to deliver high-quality services and achieve positive outcomes for the people we support or the organisation.

- Admin
- Health & Safety and Facilities

Employee of the Year

A Sense Scotland staff member who has gone above and beyond in providing excellent service. Voted on by the people we support, their families, and visitors to our charity shops.

- Davie McLean
- Margaret Boyd
- Sergei Rattray
- Yvonne McCorry

Thank you to everyone who voted for our Employee of the Year. We look forward to sharing the details of all winners after the ceremony in October!

The Ben

The Ben is a 160-year-old Scottish hospitality and drinks industry charity which supports people who work or have worked in the drinks or hospitality industry for at least two years, full-time.

If this applies to you or a member of your family, The Ben can offer a range of financial and mental health support, as well as one-off grants for emergency situations. These grants count as a donation - as such, it does not affect your benefits, nor do you need to declare it.

For more information and to apply for support, visit bensoc.org.uk.

40 Ways to Play

Our Early Years team are celebrating 40 years of Sense Scotland with 40 new exciting ways to play! The team have put together some excellent how-to guides and video resources to help children and young people with additional support needs to play at home. To view these activities, go to www.sensescotland.org.uk/play-at-home. Stay tuned for further materials!

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.

40th Anniversary Ball

Our Fundraising team are gearing up for another glamorous ball at the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum on Saturday, 15 November. Why not join us and celebrate our 40th Anniversary in style? Enjoy a wonderful event hosted by top host Alex Fleming and with entertainment from nine-piece band Big Vern 'n' the Shootahs, with platinum, gold, and silver tables to choose from. Book now at sensescotland.org.uk/anniversary-ball.

Upcoming Events

Twinkle Tots – Every Wednesday, 10:30am – TouchBase Lanarkshire

Our weekly toddler group for children aged 0 - 5 with additional support needs continues at our TouchBase in Lanarkshire (43 Leys Park, Hamilton). Book your tickets at <https://bit.ly/twinkle-tots-25> or email advisory@sensescotland.org.uk to find out more.

Carers Parliament – Thursday, 30 October – Apex Grassmarket Hotel, Edinburgh

Places are still available for the Carers Parliament!

The Carers Parliament is an annual event for unpaid carers in Scotland, giving them the opportunity to address their concerns and questions on caring directly to national and local Government decision-makers.

This year, the Carers Parliament will take place on Thursday, 30 October at the Apex Grassmarket Hotel in Edinburgh. You can also join online. If you know anyone who may wish to get involved in the Carers Parliament, they can sign up by visiting www.surveymonkey.com/r/NYHXCRV.

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.