

# LOUD and CLEAR

For friends of Sense Scotland Spring 2026

*Thanks to you*



We care.  
We connect.  
We communicate.

# LOUD and CLEAR

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Front cover: The Learning Hub –  
winners of Sense Scotland's Got  
Talent 2025

**Sense Scotland is a Scottish charity and specialised social care provider supporting people with communication support needs associated with complex and sensory disabilities, and their families, where individual needs and choices come first. Every service we provide is tailor-made and designed with individual wishes, potential and independence in mind.**

Sense Scotland now supports hundreds of families all across Scotland. We are recognised as leaders in our field and still hold true to our family values, caring for children through adolescence and into adulthood, whilst supporting them through all the challenges and opportunities along the way.

Your donations fund all the fun things that make Sense Scotland unique: music, art, social groups, play and communication sessions. It funds serious stuff too – making sure people we support are included in decisions which affect their life, are able to choose where they live, and how they spend their time.



# Changing Lives Together



2025 marked our 40th Anniversary – four decades of caring, supporting, enriching lives, and being there for people when it matters most. Not just the people we support, but their families and our staff too.

Our staff teams work tirelessly every day to make a difference to the lives of the people we support, and are the heart of our organisation.

It's really important that commitment is recognised, and, throughout the year, our regulator (the Care Inspectorate) makes visits to our services (announced or unannounced) to inspect and score them on the quality of our care and support. In Sense Scotland, we're really proud of the high scores we consistently achieve, and you'll hear more about that as you read on.

We also want our staff teams to get the recognition they deserve by sharing their stories with all of you; this edition of Loud and Clear is dedicated to a selection of our staff teams and the inspiring work they do, day in, day out.

Sadly, the work our staff do is not recognised by the Scottish Government, and we continue to speak up for social care, welcoming MPs and MSPs to TouchBase Glasgow and adding our voice to national campaigning for fair pay and proper recognition for the workforce. With crucial government budgets ahead, this work has never been more important, and we're proud to be standing alongside Unite the Union to push for sustainable funding and a stronger future for social care.

Everything you read about in this newsletter is made possible by your support. Because of you, people with complex disabilities and communication support needs are achieving, being celebrated, and living fuller lives. Thank you for standing with us – loudly and clearly – as we look to the future together.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Angela Bonomy', written in a cursive style.

**Angela Bonomy,**  
Chief Executive Officer

# More Than Care

*When families place their trust in Sense Scotland, they also place something eternally precious in our hands – their son, their daughter, their brother or sister.*



The Craigton team is one of our supported living services, supporting seven people to live independently of their families in Glasgow. At the Sense Scotland Staff and Volunteer Awards 2025, they won the award for Team of the Year (Operations), with nominations from families of the people they support, such as the following, securing this accolade.

*“This team provides care that is compassionate, creative, and person-centred, often beyond*

*what their pay reflects. They have supported my family with patience and understanding, even when I’ve been anxious. We are deeply grateful for their 24/7 commitment and unwavering support.”*

In addition to families, the team consistently receives the highest praise from the Care Inspectorate, alongside outstanding inspection scores. And it’s why families, like Sandy’s sister Jen, speak with such gratitude about the care their loved ones receive.



## “Changing Sandy’s Life” – Jen Alexander, sister of Sandy

As Sandy’s sister and legal guardian, I’ve watched the Craigton team do far more than provide care. They have become his champions.

From the very beginning, their communication stood out. When Sandy underwent surgery, staff and managers worked seamlessly together. They supported him through an unfamiliar hospital environment, managed complex post-operative medication, and even planned his meals carefully to reduce the risk of complications. Throughout it all, they patiently answered our questions, welcomed video calls, and reassured us every step of the way. That level of confidence and peace of mind is priceless.

Today, Sandy is thriving. He is happier, more confident, and more independent than we ever imagined possible.

And perhaps most importantly, they make Sandy’s dreams possible. Thanks to their dedication, Sandy finally enjoyed a long-awaited family trip to Islay with his dad. He proudly showed us the skills he’s been working on: closing doors independently from his wheelchair, pouring drinks for



the family, chopping vegetables, and using cutlery with growing confidence. These achievements reflect Sandy’s determination — but they are also the result of a staff team who truly listen to him, prioritise his goals, and support him to lead his own journey towards independence.

Every member of the Craigton team shows creativity, compassion, and a genuine belief in Sandy’s potential. They don’t just care for him. They empower him to live a full, meaningful life on his own terms.

Craigton isn’t just a care team - they are Sandy’s champions.

# Opening Doors After School

*For many young people with complex additional support needs, leaving school can feel less like a next step and more like a cliff edge. Families often tell us that when school ends, options suddenly narrow — or disappear altogether.*



That's why Sense Scotland created the Learning Hub: a three-year, post-school education programme for young people aged 17–23. Thanks to the support of funders — and donors like you — the Learning Hub is already changing lives.

## What is the Learning Hub?

The Learning Hub is based at TouchBase Glasgow and runs Monday to Friday, 9.30am–3.30pm. Learners attend full-time, following a consistent routine that mirrors school terms — something families tell us is vital for stability and confidence.

Every learner follows an individualised learning programme.

Sensory based learning – using sensory stories, real objects and learning through touch – is a key method used, alongside skills-based learning, using written work, technology and work experience. Learner classes are often a mixture of both, depending on the individual needs of the learners.

Around 70% of learning takes place within the Hub, with the remaining time spent out in the community.

## Recognised quality and care

In the Learning Hub's first, and unannounced, Care Inspectorate visit, they were recognised for their "major strengths" in the care provided, strong partnerships with families and importance placed on communication and shared decision making.

## Supporting families too

The Learning Hub also supports Learners' families to:

- Continue or return to work
- Take up education or training
- Care for other family members
- Reduce stress and uncertainty

Families tell us that knowing their son or daughter is safe, learning and happy allows them to breathe again — and plan for the future.



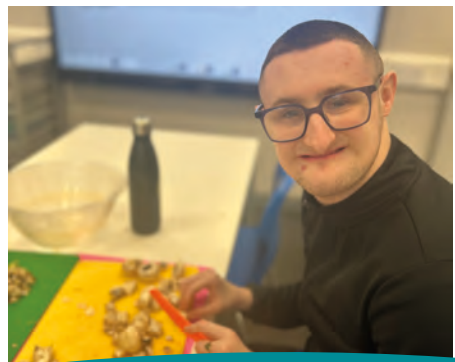
## Why your support matters

The Learning Hub is funded through a combination of local authority funding and individual support budgets, ensuring there are no cost barriers for families.

Your support helps us:

- Maintain high standards of care and learning
- Invest in staff training and development
- Provide specialist resources and equipment
- Continue offering this vital service to young people who need it most

**Thank you for believing in the potential of every young person we support — and for helping to open doors at a time when options can feel limited.**



# We communicate.

# A Very Special Place

*Spend even a short time with the Learning Hub team and one thing is clear: this isn't a traditional classroom. Education and care sit side by side, but relationships come first.*



Staff don't describe themselves as teachers standing at the front of a class. Instead, they talk about being role models and mentors. *"We're not up here and you have to listen to us. It's about mutual respect, boundaries, and showing what positive relationships look like."* Being a young staff team helps. Shared interests in music, fashion and everyday life make connections feel natural.

Learning doesn't just happen at desks. Outings, social activities and realworld experiences are woven into the timetable. This mix of structure and fun keeps learners engaged – and staff too.

*"Sometimes you're laughing all day and suddenly realise... this is my job. Then you see how excited the learners are to come in, even on a Monday morning, and it reminds you exactly why you're here. You go home feeling ten feet tall because you know you're making a real difference."*

Winning Sense Scotland's Team of the Year in 2024 was a huge milestone – recognition that the hard work, creativity and care invested in the Learning Hub was being seen beyond its walls.

And if you ask them what really makes the Learning Hub special?

*"The learners,"* they say, without hesitation. *"And the fun. We really do have the most fun."*



# “It’s Like Night and Day”

## *Jack’s Story by Mum Catherine*

When Jack was at school, every morning was a battle.

He’d tell me he didn’t feel well. He didn’t want to go. The only part of his day he really enjoyed was the bus journey there. School was noisy, busy and overwhelming. Jack is autistic and has complex learning disabilities, and although he’s sociable and chatty, the world can feel like a very loud place. By the time he got home, he was exhausted from coping.

### **Then he started at the Learning Hub. The difference was like night and day.**

From the moment he walks through the doors, he’s happy. He doesn’t cling to me. He’s straight in — “Who am I working with today?” — and off he goes. Even on days when he’s not feeling 100%, he still wants to come. That tells you everything.

The staff understand him — really understand him. They meet him on his terms, but they also help him grow. His communication has come on so much. At school, support had to be shared. Here, the team have the time to really focus on him. Now, when he starts to feel overwhelmed, he

can say, “I need to go outside.” That might sound like a small thing, but for Jack, that’s huge. It’s independence. It’s self-awareness. It’s progress.

### **He’s happier than I’ve ever known him.**

Having Sense Scotland in Jack’s life since he was 5 gives us hope. There’s a pathway. There’s continuity. There are people who know him - not just his diagnosis, but him.

For us as parents, the Learning Hub has been more than just a service. It’s knowing there is somewhere Jack belongs.



# Shop. Donate. Change Lives.



The teams in Sense Scotland's 14 charity shops help turn generosity into opportunity. Every jumper donated, every piece of furniture sold, every browse that turns into a bargain helps fund life-changing support.

Almost every item imaginable has passed through our doors — from

designer labels to vintage gems, from everyday essentials to truly unexpected finds!

If donating isn't an option right now, why not pop in and shop instead? You'll find great value, friendly faces, and the knowledge that every pound you spend helps people we support to live fuller, more independent lives.



## We care.



## Things we love to receive

Good quality clean clothes  
(no bobbling or fading please)

New clothes with tags

Children's and baby clothes

Clean baby equipment  
in excellent condition only

Furniture with safety certificates

Books (one sold for **£400** in our  
Glasgow Dumbarton Road shop!)

Bric a brac

Electrical items



## Please don't donate

Dirty clothes

Used pants or underwear

Child car seats

Single drinking glasses

Anything unsafe or unhygienic

Motorbike helmets



## Did you know?

We may be able to collect large  
furniture donations

Anything clean we can't sell is  
recycled as rags — nothing goes to  
waste.

All electrical items are PAT tested  
before sale

Some shops sell brand new items,  
including our Mecoco candles and  
melts

It costs us to dispose of items we  
cannot sell

**However you support our shops — donating, shopping, or  
spreading the word — you're helping change lives.**

**Thank you.**

# Smells Good. Feels Good.



It's been a wonderfully busy time at Mecoco — our charitable enterprise where our team of volunteers, most of whom are profoundly disabled and have complex needs, make hand-make beautiful candles, wax melts and reed diffusers, all while building skills, confidence and connection.



In the run-up to Christmas, our volunteers were rushed off their feet. We attended 25 Christmas markets, fêtes and events, introduced two brand-new festive scents — *Merry Berry* and *Mint to Be* — and enjoyed record sales, selling almost all of our Christmas stock before the big day arrived.

Amid the busy-ness, there was time to celebrate too. Volunteers met for a festive get-together, creating their own hand-crafted wreaths with help from TouchBase Ayrshire tutor Rebecca — a lovely way to mark a special season.

The creativity hasn't slowed down in the new year. Following a public and workshop vote, our newest scent has just launched — *Shrinking Violet*. A light floral



bouquet with notes of rose, violet, bergamot and warm woods, it's already proving a favourite and is available now.

We've also launched something exciting for fragrance lovers: Mecoco Subscription Mystery Boxes. Choose from candles, melts or a mix of both, delivered monthly, every two months or quarterly for £20 per box (plus postage). Each box is packed with £20+ worth of Mecoco goodies — including whoopsies, discontinued lines, cosy extras and artwork by our disabled artists — plus a personal thank you from a volunteer. It's a little surprise with a lot of feel-good.

Every purchase supports people with disabilities and helps create meaningful opportunities. You can order online at [www.mecoco.org](http://www.mecoco.org), direct from the workshop in Dalry, or at markets most weekends (details on our social media pages).

You can also buy our range of products from our Sense Scotland charity shops in Glasgow (Dumbarton Road), St Andrews, Blairgowrie, Peebles and Edinburgh



Introducing our...

## SUBSCRIPTION MYSTERY BOXES

A regular home delivery of beautiful scents, surprise treats, and feel-good impact.

**Smells good.  
Feels even better.**

**Three options**

**Three frequencies**

**just £20\* each**

\*Plus delivery



**Perfect for Mother's Day!**

# We connect.

# Legendary Lunch

Save the date – our legendary annual fundraising lunch will take place on Saturday 3rd October 2026 at the Grand Central Hotel in Glasgow.



If you love great food, a good laugh and a boogie on the dancefloor— all while supporting an incredible cause — then you won't want to miss this.

The day will be hosted by the one and only Edward Reid, bringing his trademark fashion, comedy and energy to an afternoon packed with entertainment, surprises and plenty of laughs. It's no wonder this event sells out year after year! Book a full table for friends, or grab your bestie and make it the ultimate Saturday lunch date.

Last year's Back to the 80s theme, held to celebrate our 40th anniversary, was truly unforgettable. From classic games to iconic 80's tunes, no one left

without a huge grin on their face (or sore feet)!

More than just a fabulous day out, every ticket helps Sense Scotland continue providing life-changing care, opportunities and support to people and families across Scotland.

Early booking is strongly advised. Gather your favourite people, dress up, let your hair down and join us for an afternoon to remember — all for a cause that truly matters. Tickets cost £60 per individual ticket, or a table of ten for £550.

See our website for more details and book.

[www.sensescotland.org.uk/fundraising-events](http://www.sensescotland.org.uk/fundraising-events)

# Fundraising



There are so many ways you can continue to make a difference. While donations are vital, you can also support Sense Scotland in ways that don't require an immediate financial outlay.

 **easyfundraising**  
partners donate  
to us every time  
you purchase  
from them online

**Leave a  
legacy**  
remember  
us in your  
Will.



Invest in  
someone's  
future

When the time is right, please  
remember Sense Scotland  
in your will.



## Get sponsored

take part in a  
sponsored event  
e.g. running,  
walking, sky diving...

## Donate to / buy from our shops

find us on 14 high  
streets all over  
Scotland.



play the Sense  
Scotland lottery  
and you could win  
£25000!

## One off gifts

see over on how  
to donate by post,  
phone or online

## Regular Direct Debit donation

see over to  
complete your  
regular gift  
instruction



## Hold an event for us

coffee morning,  
bake sale, quiz,  
bingo...

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GET IN TOUCH**

You can contact us via phone on 0300 330 9292 or email [fundraising@sensescotland.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@sensescotland.org.uk)



Please accept this gift of £

Tel No: .....

Email: .....

Payment method: I enclose a cheque payable to Sense Scotland or please debit my  
Visa / Mastercard / Switch

Card Number

Expiry Date  Valid or Issue Number  Security Code

## I'd like to give by Direct Debit

I would like to donate a regular gift of: ☐ £10 ☐ £20 ☐ Other £ .....

I would like this gift to be made every: ☐ Month ☐ Quarter ☐ Year

Please start my payments on the: ☐ 1st ☐ 15th of \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ (Insert Month/Year)

☐ This is a new donation ☐ This replaces a previous donation

Name: .....

Address: .....

### Direct Debit Instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Sense Scotland Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction, subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Sense Scotland and if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/ Building Society.

To: The Manager

Bank:

Address:

Post Code:

Name of account Holder(s):

Signature:

Sense Scotland is a company limited by guarantee, registered in Scotland No. SC147570. Registered Scottish Charity No. SC022097

Sort Code

Account Number

Date



For office use:  
Originator's Identification  
**601071**  
Reference

Tick this box if you pay tax ☐ *giftaid it*

I want Sense Scotland to treat all my gifts made in the last 4 years and in the future as Gift Aid donations. I confirm that I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature: .....

**Keeping in Touch** If you'd rather we no longer stay in touch via post, please tick this box. ☐

If you would like to opt out of email contact please tick this box. ☐

You can also donate online: [www.sensescotland.org.uk/donate-now](http://www.sensescotland.org.uk/donate-now)