

# forth valley sensory centre

## Autumn 2017 Newsletter

The leaves are falling and the sunshine has cleared away (yes we know what sunshine?) but Autumn is a time for change and we are always looking for new ways to make improvement to the service and support Your Centre provides.

We are making steps with that journey. The Café and halls have had a makeover and we are looking forward to a similar transformation in our sensory garden which we hope to officially unveil in Spring 2018.

Enjoy another packed newsletter with lots of updates, events information and features for you to peruse. We always welcome suggestions and contributions to our newsletter and the next edition will be issued at the end of the year! Time flies!

## News Round-Up

### Café gets the makeover treatment

The big news has been the refurbishment of our Café corridors and halls. This £20,000 makeover courtesy of MITE, TSB, Arthur Mackay and Go Green has seen new flooring, lighting, acoustic ceiling tiles, a bright new unit to hold all our talking and large print books and a fantastic 'blackboard' wall to make sure we can always have our specials up to date without any hanging notices that could get bumped or cause injury.



There are large print and braille menus too. If you would like to use these please just ask the staff who will be happy to help.

We have recently got a new cake and sweet treat supplier, so we'll be offering a wider selection of items and many more gluten free options. There really is no excuse for not giving us a go!

## **Forth Valley Deaf Children's Society Family Day**

Forth Valley Deaf Children's Society recently held their annual family day here at the Centre and this year, the theme was a totally tropical fiesta!



Garish shirts and shorts were worn by many all afternoon even if the weather wasn't always quite so supportive!

There were lots of great activities on offer including the National Deaf Children's Society "listening" bus in providing helpful support and advice for the 100+

attendees on the day. Children got up close and personal with a range of snakes, spiders and other creatures courtesy of the Animal Man as well as enjoying face painting, slime making, arts and crafts and much more. Parents benefited from the wealth of advice and support on offer.

Jenn Pow, Head of Audiology NHS FV, who organised the Event on behalf of Forth Valley Deaf Children's Society said: "We had all the seasons in one day but that didn't stop the party spirit. It was great to see so many people here once again having fun, making new friends and learning more about the support available to families who have a child with a hearing condition.

"A huge thanks to the staff and volunteers who helped us out on the day and to Forth Valley Sensory Centre for once again allowing us to turn the building into a completely crazy place to be! We'd also like to thank Morrison's and Asda for providing toys and drinks for the event."

## Centre Goes International

Our fame as a unique centre where people with sensory loss, their friends, carers and families can all come together in one place continues to grow internationally.

This was highlighted recently when we hosted a week-long visit from Marta Bosch-Baliarda, a Catalan sign language interpreter from Barcelona. She was here as part of a ERASMUS Programme (European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) visit, and was looking to find out more about how people with a sensory impairment receive help and support in Scotland



Marta took time to meet with our deaf service users, picking up BSL and Scottish slang in sign language (nothing rude we understand!) as well as speaking with all our Centre partners to find out what they do and just what makes Forth valley Sensory Centre so special.

As a goodbye gift, Marta provided a traditional and delicious Spanish buffet with tomato bread and a selection of meats. She also presented us with a book on Catalan signs, a rare first edition which you are free to browse in our Cafe.

## Pop-Up Restaurant



In September the Centre hosted its first ever pop-up restaurant in association with Forth Environment Link. The menu was freshly and lovingly prepared by staff and volunteers.

The vegetables were sourced from Tomnaha Market Garden based in Comrie – 30 miles from Camelon.

Tomnaha run a market garden using a Community Supported Agriculture approach. More information can be found on their website. [www.tomnaha.com](http://www.tomnaha.com)

The Dairy & Orchard fruit produce was from Knockraich Dairy in Fintry, 17 miles from Camelon. You can visit their website to learn more about their diary and products. [http://knockraich.com/artisan-dairy/](http://knockraich.com/artisan-dairy/our-dairy/)  
The Bread, came from Riverside Bakery CIC, which is a community supported bakery in Cultenhove – for more information visit their website [www.riversidebakerycic.org](http://www.riversidebakerycic.org)

Food was prepared by our own Sara, David and volunteer Andy alongside Forth Environment Link staff, Vicki and Em. Guests enjoyed first class service from our volunteers Aimee and Eireanne!

## **New partnership with Solicitors for Older People Scotland (SOPS)**

We identified a real need for people to get impartial legal advice after a number of our Centre Users from various groups requested some general legal information. As a result, we have set up an agreement with SOPS so that Centre Users can benefit from a 10 per cent discount on any legal services they need.



A number of Centre Users at the meetings were very interested to hear about important things like how to qualify for legal aid and about setting power of attorney if they should fall ill. There is an article from SOPS giving more details on this later in the newsletter.

Working with Age Concern, SOPS themselves are based in Falkirk and are a group of Scottish Law Firms operating across Scotland but with one ethos; to support vulnerable people in a caring and sensitive way. The Centre is undertaking sensory awareness training with a number of SOPS staff to ensure that they are best able to meet your needs.

For more information on SOPS and the services they offer see [www.solicitorsforolderpeoplescotland.co.uk](http://www.solicitorsforolderpeoplescotland.co.uk) or visit the Later Life Centre in Falkirk' Newmarket Street.

## Fundraising

### Kiltwalkers Step Up!

Our 'Sensory Strollers' were striding with pride this weekend completing the Edinburgh Kiltwalk. Luckily good weather prevailed and the team not only enjoyed a great stroll but also some good banter and raised some much needed funds for the Centre too.

This year, all donations are being given a 40% top up by The Hunter Foundation. At the last count our fundraising total from this event stood at £1500, however donations are still coming in and it's not too late to donate <http://tinyurl.com/yb2mlqhc>



Huge thanks to everyone who has already supported our "Sensory Strollers" though, your support means a lot to the Centre. Also, many congratulations to Alison, Caroline and Jacquie, plus their friends and family who all took part in the walk on our behalf.

### Malvina digs deep for another donation!

Centre User Malvina Dwyer has donated £776.20 to the Centre as a result of her recent garden open day. The money raised by Malvina will go towards the cost of supporting the very popular lip reading group run weekly at the Centre by tutor Jill Bradshaw.

This is the second year in a row that Malvina has supported the Centre

by opening up her award winning garden in Avonbridge and in the process she has raised almost £2000.

Centre Manager Jacquie Winning said: “We can’t thank Malvina enough for her generosity. It sounds like a simple thing, opening up a garden to let people walk around and admire the flora but aside from the huge amount of work undertaken



each year to keep the garden looking picture perfect, anyone who has attended the event will know Malvina goes a huge effort with raffles, tombola and the very famous home baking stall.

“Everyone at the Centre would like to thank Malvina for all her effort and I know that as popular and useful as the lip reading group is, this money will continue to make a big difference to people who are managing their hearing loss and trying to maintain their independence.”

Lip reading classes take place each Monday 6pm to 8pm at the Centre, but be quick, the class often has a waiting list!

## Groups and Classes

### Self Defence with David Black

The next self-defence class with David starts on Friday 13th October from 2 - 3pm. The eight week course teaches all aspects of self-defence and personal safety from avoiding conflict, to just what the law allows you to do to defend yourself, your friends or property if someone grabs you or becomes aggressive for any reason.



The total course cost is £20 for eight weeks. BSL interpreters can be on hand to offer communication support if needed. The class is open to everyone so please see reception if you would like to register.

## **Fancy teaching Lip-reading?**

Our resident lip reading tutor, Jill, is a committee member of the Scottish Course to Train Tutors of Lip-reading and they have a new course starting in January.

Applications to become a tutor and help make a difference to the lives of people with hearing loss are not being invited.

For more information please contact:

[scttlipreading@gmail.com](mailto:scttlipreading@gmail.com)

Tel/text: 07599 342288

[www.scotlipreading.org.uk](http://www.scotlipreading.org.uk)

## **Stirling BPS Outreach Group**

Giving people with a Sensory Impairment a chance to meet with others for a chat and refreshments.

Get hints and tips from others and how to cope with sight or hearing loss. Wide range of interesting speakers. Our group meets monthly (every 2nd Tuesday) enabling access to information and providing advice and support to those coping with sight loss, within the Stirling area.

Any new members (and carers) will be made most welcome.

For more information on our meetings call Brenda on 01324 590888.

Email [brendawhyte@forthvalleysensorycentre.org](mailto:brendawhyte@forthvalleysensorycentre.org)

## **Bo'ness BPS Outreach Group**

Enjoy visiting Garden Centres? Like going out for meals or Just Chatting over a cup of coffee but have problems with your hearing, eyesight or both?

Forth Valley Sensory Centre runs a group for people with a Sensory Impairment that live in Bo'ness

Meetings take place on the last Wednesday of every month 1pm – 3pm

For more information Contact Brenda on 01324 590888 or email [brendawhyte@forthvalleysensorycentre.org](mailto:brendawhyte@forthvalleysensorycentre.org)

Sighted Guides, Assistance Dogs and Carers also welcome.

## Anyone for tennis?



Our Friday Tennis session for sensory people has become so popular that we are making it a weekly event.

This is specifically designed for blind and partially sighted people or people with hearing loss (we can provide a BSL interpreter if needed).

The coach is Hannah Pickford who is very well trained and she has been supported by The Dan Maskell Tennis Trust to deliver these short tennis courses.

The cost is just £3 and those who have been taking part since February have been raving about how good it is. Why not come and give it a go?

## Events

### Afternoon Tea Sunday 8 October

Our popular Afternoon Tea and fashion show with Libby's of Larbert and Culture Clothing with fashion to suit many tastes

We are proud to offer a top-notch afternoon tea with all the usual favourites provided by the renowned Clive Ramsay, one of the area's best known food innovators and restaurateurs. You can be sure of a quality experience.

Tickets are £15 per person and include all food and refreshments. Those

who have attended in the past will know just what a great afternoon out this is for friends and family so get your tickets from reception as soon as possible before these sell out!

## **Firewalk Fundraiser Saturday 14 October**

For something a little different, why not try a Firewalk? Taking place at Hilly Cow Wigwams, Kirknewton in West Lothian, just outside Edinburgh, the evening with a difference features relaxation and meditation as well as setting new goals and challenges for your life while the wood fuel burns alongside.

At the end of the evening, you walk across the hot coals, signifying your crossing a new approach to life. Get in touch to register and get your sponsor form. Discounts available for accommodation at Hilly Cow for those who want to make a weekend of it for their firewalk experience!

[www.hillycowwigwams.co.uk](http://www.hillycowwigwams.co.uk)

## **Halloween Party Friday 27 October**

Organised by our very own Centre User Fundraising Group, this is an evening of spooky fun – for grown-ups! Featuring party favourites, like dooking for apples, the party is on 27th October from 7pm to 10pm. Fancy dress prizes on offer and there will be an adult and junior category (age 14 to 18).

There will be a buffet and raffle, plus, you can bring your own bottle (sorry - no under 14's allowed, please do drink responsibly). Tickets just £10 for adults and £5 for juniors.

## **Prize Bingo Friday 3 November**

Our Stirling Blind and Partially Sighted group are putting on a prize bingo event at the Masonic Hall in Bannockburn this November.

Eyes down at 7:30pm, there will be raffles as well as the usual bingo fun. Admission just 50p and everyone is welcome. Many thanks to Roberta and the Stirling Group for organising this event!

## Winter Fayre Saturday 25 November

The famous Sensory Centre Event! This year the Winter Fayre is taking place slightly earlier on 25th November from 11am to 2pm to allow you get into the Christmas spirit. This year though, entry will be completely free! Expect the usual great range of stalls, raffles and tombola as well as face painting and a special visitor for the children!



We have a couple of stall spaces available for small business owners. If you would like to book one for a donation of only £10 please contact Martin at the Centre.

## Jim McClean – Postcard from Inchcailloch

Inchcailloch is an Island on Loch Lomond and is really nice to visit. So twas off to Balmaha on the train. Queen Street first, then Balloch, then on the bus from Balloch. Even that part has some nice scenery heading towards Drymen, itself a lovely place to visit.

Find the boatyard then the wee wooden hut office; pay your £5 for the return boat trip over. Remember and tell them when you want to be picked up to come back and mind the ferry folk stop at 5pm! The journey itself takes 5 mins.

All right tis an island but you can take the wrong path and get lost...well me brother and I did and there is another small pier so take note of the one you get taken to so you don't head for the



wrong one...(hint hint!). Various paths take you to different things to see but while you're fresh go to the top of the island for the views which are wonderful.

You can actually camp on the island but only so many are allowed to stay overnight and I believe you have to contact the national park authorities to get a permit. But do take a picnic as there is a great beach which offers ripping views. Heads up ...no toilets! There a building at the beach which used to be a toilet block but is out of use, shame. Another good reason to take your own food is the fact that the Oak Tree Inn back in Balmaha isn't cheap with a burger and chips at around £12.

There is a statue to Tom Weir (Scottish broadcaster famed for Weir's Way) to be found near the loch. I used to love his tales of the area and further afield especially around Loch Katrine, also a village shop to replenish the stocks, all in all a lovely day trip.

## **My spouse, my friend, my carer – be my attorney!**

*By Vivienne Malcom, Solicitors for Older People Scotland*

Most people in Scotland have a "best friend". For many our best friend is our spouse – the person we trust to see to our needs – to nurse us when we fall ill and generally make sure we are looked after. That's great and comforting for most of us. But what happens if someone falls so ill that they can't communicate with their best friend and carer? What happens if someone falls so ill that they cannot do anything for themselves and they have lost "legal capacity".

Many people seem to assume the best friend or spouse can carry on doing things for the ill person. But the truth is in Scotland legally they can do nothing – yes nothing. Even a spouse inherits no legal powers to do anything for an incapacitated partner. This does not seem to be widely understood.

Where someone is so ill as to be legally incapacitated nobody has powers to do anything – unless these powers are granted by the local sheriff court following a court action – or unless some limited powers are granted by the Public Guardian – a public official responsible for a range of legal matters relative to adults with incapacity. So sadly many

families are faced with going to court to have the court give even a spouse powers to deal with the affairs of his or her partner – assuming say the partner is incapacitated by for example a stroke.

Going to court is a bit of a daunting prospect for anyone – and even more difficult perhaps when the family is dealing with the illness in the first place.

But the good news is – with just a little foresight and forward planning – all this hassle for families can be avoided. That spouse\carer\ best friend can be legally appointed as the person’s attorney – provided the appointment is made before the illness causing the incapacity strikes. Once appointed as attorney the best friend will have all the legal powers granted in the document appointing him or her – which is called a Power of Attorney. Usually that will mean the attorney will have automatically and legally all the powers necessary to look after and make decisions for the ill person.

With so many of us living longer and experiencing debilitating illness it is just good sense to appoint an attorney. It is actually a very easy process maybe needing one or two visits to a solicitor. So make that friend\carer or spouse your attorney as well – it will save so much trouble should illness strike. And the very best news for older people is that most pensioners – even householders with up to £25,000 savings can still get legal aid to get their Power of Attorney put in place.



## Poetry Corner - Summer, by Jill Hendry

In sunshine’s bright glow  
The colours of flowers dance  
In the light breeze cooling the air  
As children laugh and play  
With no cares or fears  
Till the warm night darkness nears  
As they head for their slumber  
And dream of adventures to come



The birds wave in the sky  
As the summer sun smiles good night  
People sit watching the night stars  
Till they also slumber in the night

The sun rises in the cool morning sky  
And the morning dew sparkles on the flowers  
As if fairies began to flee from the light  
Spreading their dust on flowers as they take flight  
And the children once more  
Run and play in summers warm glow.

*Jill Hendry is one of our Blind and Partially Sighted Centre Users.*

## **Hellos and goodbyes!**

Sadly we are saying goodbye to two staff, Lynne Frail our fundraising coordinator is leaving to take up a new job at Forth Valley College. We'd like to thank Lynne for all her work here over the last two years which has made a real difference to our fundraising approach.

Sara Robertson is also leaving her role within our Café to take up a new catering post in a Care Home. In her tenure, Sara has made some big changes to the Café menu and secured the Healthy Living Award for the Centre.

We are sure you will all like to join us in wishing Lynne and Sara all the best for the future. A new Café Supervisor, Carolyn Dawson will be starting shortly in the Café so be sure to introduce yourself and give her a warm welcome to the Centre.

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