
forth valley sensory centre

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Welcome to our Winter newsletter

The last few months have been packed with activity and as the nights draw in and the year comes to an end, the rest of 2016 is no different.

We hope you enjoy this latest update on what has been and will be happening at your Forth Valley Sensory. As always, we welcome your comments and contributions, please email sensory@forthvalleysensorycentre.org if you have any feedback or there is a topic you would like us to cover.

News!

New website!

Our new website is up and running at www.forthvalleysensorycentre.org. There is still some work to be done and content to be added. The level of information will improve over time as more activities take place and more people engage with the site.

However, it is great that the Centre has a real voice on the web, making it much easier for people to find out about our work and the activities and services offered by our partners here in Camelon.

The site features lots of pictures and video content with new items added regularly. We are always looking for new stories and ideas so please get in touch if you have any suggestions for the site. Email martinallen@forthvalleysensorycentre.org

Centre refresh a great success!

The Centre recently benefited from a facelift courtesy of volunteers from DWP and Carillion who came in to do some painting.

Staff from both organisations gave up a day of their time to repaint the main hall, the main corridor, reception area, toilets and Cafe. The result has been a fresh new look and the removal of unsightly scuffs and marks from the walls. Paint was supplied by Johnstone's Paints at Middlefield Industrial Estate Falkirk and by B&Q, also in Falkirk with help through Sharon MacDonald at Business Connects.

Partnership Manager, Martin Allen said:

"To have public and private sector teams working so closely together to benefit our Centre Users was amazing. They worked their socks off from the moment they came in right through the day.

"We couldn't have done it without Jim from Carillion though. His organisation and knowledge on the day made all the difference and the result of the painting is fantastic. We still have plenty more to do and a few more areas we want to cover but it is great to have a brighter, more welcoming facility for everyone to come along and use.



"As well as those who were there on the day, we have to pass our thanks to both B&Q and Johnstone's who really showed their community spirit. Their expertise and colour skills have lifted the Cafe Tiki interior and while the changes are subtle, the impact isn't. We can't recommend their services enough. Huge thanks to Margaret and Julie at Johnstone's and Cathy and Joe at B&Q."

Family Fun Day

NHS Forth Valley Audiology Team, Forth Valley Deaf Children's Society and Forth Valley Sensory Centre joined together to host a Family Fun and Support Day on 27th August.

Held within Forth Valley Sensory Centre, and with bright sunshine, the event was a huge success and attended by over 100 people from across the area.



Specifically aimed at families who have a child with a hearing impairment, there were lots of different exhibitors and things to do, including; the Play Talk Read Bus, the National Deaf Children's Society roadshow truck and even Police Scotland who let children play in a patrol car.

Stands inside included; Action on Hearing Loss, Central Scotland Regional Equality Council, Hearing Dogs, Oticon Hearing, Phonak Hearing and Starkey Labs, all hearing aid manufacturers.

Jennifer Pow, Audiology Services Manager, NHS Forth Valley and the main organiser of the event said: "It was a fantastic event and so well supported. Everyone had a great time and I'd like to thank everyone who came along, helped out or hosted activities for their part in making the day such a success. It was great so see so many people coming together and new friends being made."

Café Tiki wins Healthyliving Award!

Our public food and beverage point, Café Tiki, has been awarded healthyliving status following a recent inspection.

The award is made to establishments that commit to providing healthy eating options and make sure food is prepared with health in mind



Café Manager Sara Robertson said: “What this means for customers is that you can always find a healthy option available, from cereal bars to fresh fruit. We only use low fat spread in our sandwiches and our home cooked food is prepared in a way that reduces the fat content.

“Our cook David makes all his soups and meals each day using fresh ingredients so you know there is nothing artificial. We also have a range of fruit smoothies alongside our regular selection of herbal teas and fair trade organic coffee, all available with semi skimmed milk.”

The healthyliving award is a national award for the foodservice sector in Scotland. It has long been recognised that caterers can play an important role in influencing what their customers eat, and it is important to recognise and reward those who are making it easier for their customers to eat more healthily. The healthyliving award aims to achieve this.

The award criteria are based on the general principles of a healthy balanced diet and have been developed to be in keeping with Scottish dietary targets. Simple changes to the way a caterer works could make a significant difference to their business.

Upcoming Events

We're Here Too! - 15th November

From visiting family to belly dancing, we know that older people should be able to do the things they love. We're Here Too brings together people who want to see more opportunities for older people who need more support, so they can participate in the issues and activities that interest them.



This year we will be having discussions around 3 themes at our events:

1. Building stronger links between people living in care homes and other supported settings and people in their local communities
2. Keeping active
3. What works for older people in BME communities.

Come along to the event that is convenient for you from 10am – 3.30pm. Tea, coffee, cake and lunch will be provided. There is information on the programme for each event at www.otbds.org/projects/were-here-too/ Contact Outside the Box for more information: alice@otbds.org or phone: 0141 419 0451

Winter Fayre - 3rd December

Our annual Winter Fayre is back with a bang and promises to be bigger and better than ever! The event promises to be one to remember and everyone is welcome. The Centre is working with the Camelon Community Trust to make this a special day for everyone who lives near or uses the Centre.

Outside in the garden, Santa will be setting up his sleigh and there will be festive food on offer, including mulled wine and mince pies.

There will be the usual stalls, raffle and tombola, plus the ever popular bottle bin organised by the Visually Impaired

Stirling Group. There will be home baking and Christmas gifts, plus activities for children such as crafts and a storyteller to make this a real family occasion.



More details will be released soon, watch out for information on our social media channels (search for @FVSensoryCentre on Facebook and Twitter) regarding pricing etc.

RNIB Scotland Fundraiser - 9th December



RNIB Scotland will be having its Winter Fundraiser on the Friday the 9th of December. There will be an online auction as well as a live auction here at Forth

Valley Sensory Centre. Earlier this year £500 was raised for the charity and this Winter we hope to do just as well.

Prizes will range from theatre tickets to talking watches and clocks, with many an amazing deal to be found.

For any information regarding links to the online auction or the live Auction on the Friday the 18th of November please contact Marc or Eilidh on 0888 or email

MBozza@RNIB.org.uk or eilidh.rnib@gmail.com

Slimming World - Weekly

We are delighted to have brought Slimming World to the Centre on Wednesday nights and we are even more pleased that it will be accessible for Centre Users.



A BSL interpreter will be present at the 5:30pm session and large print and audio versions of the information packs will also be available.

This is a great opportunity to take part in a group which might not otherwise be accessible to people with a sensory impairment. It is also bringing new people into the Centre on a weekly basis and shows that our rooms can be used for any number of different events or activities!

Fundraising

Sensory Garden

Following an unfortunate incident of vandalism in October, the community rallied round to help us not only repair but consider renovating our Sensory Garden.



The response on social media was huge and attracted national attention with the BBC and STV both running stories on the damage.

As a result, lots of people came forward to make donations. We have received large and small amounts and we are grateful for every penny raised. A Crowdfunding page has been set up to raise £1500 for the Garden and donations can still be given through the page here

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/Camelon-sensory-repair>

We have also received £800 from the Canal Inn following a quiz night and £500 from Camelon Parish Church which we were very grateful for.

As always, keep an eye out for further updates but please remember to vote for the Sensory Garden in Tesco stores across Falkirk from 31st October to 13th November as we could receive up to £12,000 as a result of your votes! Thank you for your ongoing support.

Malvina Raises over £1000!

We've received the money raised through Malvina's Garden Party! The event raised over £1000, the highest total ever and thanks again to all those who came along and to Malvina for her hospitality and support.

This money has been used to put on lipreading classes at the Centre, something Malvina herself finds extremely useful. Check out our website for more information on all our classes and times.



Image shows Centre Manager Jacquie Winning with Malvina, Centre Users Ian and Cathy Carmichael and Fundraising Coordinator Lynne Frail.

Volunteering

Volunteers step up

Vicki our volunteer coordinator has been fiendishly busy over the past few months with training sessions, events and many new recruits all to help the Centre.

A Sighted Guide training session took place on the 18th October while successful training session for four new volunteers on the 22nd October.

Visitors to the Café may also have noticed a few fresh faces behind the counter, we have pupils from St Mungo's Pupils coming in on a four week rotation for work experience. They are learning about food hygiene and just how much work goes into providing lunches, teas

and coffee for our varied clientele.

Aside from that, our links with local schools are growing. We're soon starting work with some enterprise students from Falkirk High while other students from St Mungo's, Falkirk High and Denny High School are about to begin placements at the centre, helping out in a variety of roles.

We still very much need drivers to help get people to and from the Centre and our groups and have a wide range of other volunteering opportunities available for the right people. If you are interested in working with us we offer full training and lots of support. Contact Vicki at the Centre for more information vickiferguson@forthvalleysensorycentre.org

Employment and Welfare Advice

New Welfare Advice Service

Centre users have been able to access important welfare advice from RNIB Scotland for some time; however, we are pleased to announce that Laura Shand will be taking up a similar role for Action on Hearing Loss.

This is alongside existing support provided by Action on Hearing Loss on employment and welfare issues.

If you are interested in meeting with Laura to discuss; disability benefits and grants, housing issues, appeals and suspensions, understanding letter or changes to circumstances please call her on 0141 341 5346 or email laura.shand@hearingloss.org.uk

For RNIB Scotland, call the Centre on 0131 590 888 and ask for the Resource Centre team who will be able to arrange an appointment or confirm when the next drop in session will be taking place.

As well as welfare advice both RNIB Scotland and Action on Hearing Loss offer employment advice from the Centre. Both provide advice for all ages, be it young people seeking a job or older people, already in employment who are managing a visual or hearing



impairment. Advice and support is also available for employers too, on how to make sure they comply with the Equality Act 2010 and even access to funding to help support sensory impaired workers.

The topic of employment was the subject of our recent 'Business Breakfast' in association with Forth Valley Chamber of Commerce. Both RNIB Scotland and Action on Hearing Loss spoke passionately about supporting people in and into employment.

Other organisations, including DWP and Remploy also offer support for employers and employees including funding to make reasonable adaptations for employment.

Please contact the Centre if you would be interested in finding out more.

Remploy - Putting Ability First



Remploy Forth Valley Office is based in Stirling City Centre, a team of 2 specialist advisors who work with people with long term health conditions and disabilities to understand their career aspirations and specific development needs. This enables us to create a tailor made plan to equip individuals with the right skills to move into sustainable employment.

Our team have their own sets of skills and knowledge to give the best support they can, Jacqueline has many years' experience in delivering development modules and Jenifer has British Sign Language qualifications allowing for effective communication.

Our growing presence in Scotland means that since 2010, Remploy has found more than 8,500 jobs in Scotland for disabled and disadvantaged people.

Remploy is proud to work closely with Skills Development Scotland and in 2015 we were delighted to sign the Scottish Business Pledge supporting a fairer Scotland and enabling fairer work in Scotland. The pledge is aligned with Remploy's values and our mission to create an inclusive society. We encourage other businesses that we work with to sign the pledge and help to create more employment opportunities for disabled people in Scotland.

Remploy work with a range of organisations throughout Scotland including: national and local Government, employers, local authorities, employment providers, healthcare providers, colleges and housing associations matching them with the right people for their business and helping them to build and sustain a skilled and diverse workforce.

Website: www.remploy.co.uk/scotland

Putting a stop to Hate Crime

Don't Tolerate Hate Crime - Report it!

Hate Crime Awareness Week took place between 8-15 October 2016, during which Central Scotland Regional Equality Council (CSREC) reached out to the Forth Valley community to raise awareness of what hate crimes are and how individuals and groups can report them, should they ever experience it themselves or witness it happening to someone else.



We held a full-day awareness-raising session with the British Transport Police at Stirling Train Station ON Monday 10 October, where we reached 1,100 commuters, and provided them with information about hate crimes and how to report them. We also visited Forth Valley College's Stirling Campus and spoke to more than 100 students about how they could report incidents of hate crime.

But what is a hate crime? It is a crime motivated by malice or ill will towards a social group on the basis of their race, sexual orientation, religion or faith, disability or transgender or gender identity. However, you don't have to be hit for it to be a hate crime. A hate crime can also include verbal abuse, swearing, threats, intimidation, harassment, bullying, physical abuse, graffiti, vandalism or online abuse.

You might wonder what benefit there is to reporting hate crime. If hate crime isn't reported, the person responsible might do something more violent in the future if they think they can get away with it. Only by being aware of hate crimes can the police have the information necessary to stop things from getting worse. The police are also required to treat incidents of hate crime and repeat incidents more seriously. And finally, crimes motivated by hate can often receive more severe sentences.

CSREC and the Forth Valley Sensory Centre both operate as Third Party Reporting Centres for hate crimes, which means that anyone who has witnessed or who has been a victim of hate crime can report it to us, and we will then pass on details of the incident to Police Scotland for them to investigate or record. For a full list of Third Party Reporting Centres, please visit our website at www.csrec.org.uk/report-hate-crime/

We encourage everyone who has witnessed or who has been the victim of a hate crime to report it to either Police Scotland on 101 (or 999 in an emergency situation), or to use CSREC or the Forth Valley Sensory Centre's Third Party Reporting facilities to report hate crime, which you can do on an anonymous basis. We are available at Community Education Centre, Park Street, Falkirk, FK1 1RE, by telephone on 01324 610 920, or at admin@csrec.org.uk if you would like to talk to us.

Don't Tolerate Hate – Report Every Incident of Hate Crime.

Thank you!

We hope you have enjoyed our newsletter. Please feel free to share with friends, family and colleagues! Also, if there is anything you would like to see in our newsletter, suggestions for other articles or just feedback or queries on the content here, then please get in touch sensory@forthvalleysensorycentre.org