



# Fife Carers Centre

# Newsletter

Supporting carers throughout Fife

## Seasons Greetings

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support during 2011 and to wish you all the very best in the festive season and a healthy and happy 2012.

**Change to opening hours - we've changed our Thursday opening hours to be 9.30 to 4.30.**

## Fife Carers Emergency Cards - now available!

In the last issue of the Newsletter we told you about plans for the Fife Carers Emergency Cards. We're pleased to tell you these are now available! The Carers Emergency Card is a joint venture between Fife Carers Centre and Fife Council and any carer living and caring in Fife can apply for one.

The card is the same size as a credit card and it identifies you as a carer. No personal information is shown on it – just a reference number unique to you.

Before you are given the Carers Emergency Card, you need to fill in a form with the details of your emergency action plan. This is the plan that will be put into action if something happens to you that means you temporarily can't be there for the person you care for. The plan asks you to nominate two relatives, neighbours or friends, who could be contacted in the event that you're involved in an emergency or are for some reason unable to get to the person you care for.

When anyone telephones the number on the card and quotes the personal reference number your agreed action plan will be put into operation – the call centre will contact the emergency contact named in your plan so they can ensure the person you care for is looked after.

If you are a carer and think this would be useful for you the first step is to ask Fife Carers Centre to send you an application form – the application form is self explanatory and easy to complete. Call us on 01592 642999 for more information or to request an application form.



### Keeping paperwork under control can be a full time job!

If you're a carer and find yourself dealing with the mountain of paperwork that

seems part of the caring role find out more about our **Carers Toolkit** and how you can get one on page 3.

We can't make the mountain go away – But we can help make it a little easier to deal with!



## Fife Carers Centre Holiday Season Opening Hours

We will be closed

**Monday 26th, Tuesday 27th December 2011**

**and Monday 2nd and 3rd January 2012 and open**

**normal hours on other dates.**

## New Manager for Fife Carers Centre

### Fife Carers Centre

157 Commercial Street,  
Kirkcaldy, KY1 2NS  
Tele: (01592) 642999  
Fax: (01592) 263910  
Text: 07881 691391

e-mail: [centre@fifecarers.co.uk](mailto:centre@fifecarers.co.uk)  
Scottish Charity No SC029466

#### How do we help carers?

We offer carers in Fife the following services:

Up to date information & support.  
Benefit Checks  
Training Workshops & Information Seminars.  
Carer Support Groups.  
Complementary Therapies.  
... as well as a warm welcome, listening ear and a delicious cup of tea!

#### Fife Carer Centre staff are:

**Kevin Flett**

*Centre Manager*

**Mhairi Lochhead**

*Carer Support Worker*

**Cindy Souter**

*Carer Support Worker*

**Grant Kidd**

*Carer Support Worker*

**Irene Jones**

*Receptionist & Administration Assistant*

**Julie Sinclair**

*Finance & Administration Officer*  
Susan Measures

*Receptionist & Administration Assistant*

**Lesley Childs**

*Training and Information Officer*

#### Our drop in Opening times are:

Monday	9.30 - 1.00
Tuesday	9.30 - 4.30
Wednesday	9.30 - 1.00
Thursday	9.30 - 4.30
Friday	9.30 - 4.00

This Newsletter is published quarterly by Fife Carers Centre, 157 Commercial Street, Kirkcaldy, KY1 2NS. Please contact the editor, Lesley Childs, if you have any articles you would like to contribute or if you would like your details added to or removed from our mailing list.

This November we welcome Kevin Flett who has joined us as manager of Fife Carers Centre. We asked Kevin to introduce himself and tell us what attracted him to come and work with us in Fife. He told us "I'm originally from Caithness, but left home in my late teens to study in Glasgow. For most of the past thirty years or so I've lived in different parts of Scotland and the north of England, spending almost the



Kevin Flett  
Fife Carers Centre  
Manager

past ten years in the Dumfries area. I've been married to Vikki since 1987 and we have twin girls. One stays in Edinburgh and the other has just finished studying at St Andrews.

My working life has been spent between serving in church ministry and working with homeless people, focussing on the addictions field. For the past six years I've been a Policy Officer, and for a period of secondment, a Commissioning Manager with Dumfries and Galloway Council and NHS, mainly developing strategy, designing and commissioning services and working on a range of other projects. I have a real interest in involving service users in creating the services they wish to see and ensuring their voices and views are heard and incorporated into plans and developments. Whilst enjoying the policy work I've been keen to return to something a bit more connected to the reality of peoples' lives. The job at the Centre offers a fresh opportunity, which I hope will provide an outlet for the experience I've gathered over the years. My wife and I spent around 20 years directly caring for one of our daughters who has a range of complex needs, so the Centre also offers a chance to use some of my personal experience and understanding. Moving to Fife also brings us nearer to family, as well as closer to the sea, which is always a plus for somebody with salt in his blood!"

So welcome Kevin – we look forward to working with you!

### Give as you shop and raise money for Fife Carers Centre

Our fabulous friends at Picante have come up with another way of helping us to fundraise. If you buy anything at Picante and quote the reference **MfifeCarersCentre** the shop will donate 10% of the value of the sale to us. How fantastic is that – so get on down there and treat yourself to a lovely new scarf and gloves for winter, and maybe a handbag to put them in then you'll need matching boots and why stop there! You'll find Picante at Unit H4, Newark Road South, in Glenrothes – not far from the Bankhead roundabout, or take a look at the website on [www.picantedirect.com](http://www.picantedirect.com).

## Save our Sanity! (and money and time too!)

If there's one thing us folk at Fife Carers Centre know it's that carers are almost always busy people with busy lives! So we understand that sometimes plans go awry and things you meant to do just slip by and before you know it - whoops! It's too late...however recently we have noticed an increasing number of people who have an appointment to meet up with a Carer Support Worker or who have booked to come on one of our information sessions failing to show up. As you can imagine this drives us bit potty!



It does cause us some significant problems and costs us a fair bit of money too – it means that Carer Support Workers find themselves often driving a fair distance only to find no one in, they then have to rearrange appointments and so the queue of carers waiting to see them just keeps getting longer! For the information sessions and workshops we are paying for venues and tutors to run them and still have to pay even if no one shows up!

To combat this problem we will be offering to remind carers, either by phone or by text, about their appointments and workshop places but we also ask that wherever possible **please just let us know** (even if it's short notice) that you are no longer able to keep an appointment or place on a workshop – just give us a call on 01592 642999 and we can make other arrangements.

**Remember!** You won't get a reminder from the council to replace your Blue European Parking Badge for Disabled People! So remember to mark on your calendar or in your diary when you need to apply for a new one!

## Let us help you help yourself!

Sign up today for the *“Generally useful things for unpaid/family carers to know and do.”* information session and to receive a Carers Toolkit.

Becoming a carer is something that almost always takes us by surprise and being unprepared for it can mean that the sudden flood of new faces, paperwork, appointments and everything else that caring involves can quickly grow out of control.

Recognising how difficult it can be to think about staying organised whilst everything is going on has led us to developing the “Carers Toolkit” in order to help you. The toolkit will go some way to helping you think about the things it would be useful to keep track of and gives you somewhere to keep the information.



The “Carers Toolkits” are available from Fife Carers Centre but rather than just plonking them in your lap and leaving you to get on with them we will be introducing them and handing them out at the *“Generally useful things for unpaid/family carers to know and do.”* information sessions or when the Carer Support Worker meets you for an appointment. The dates and location for forthcoming *“Generally useful things for unpaid/family carers to know and do.”* information sessions are:

Thursday 15 December 2011 Fife Carers Centre 6.30pm – 9.30pm

Saturday 21 January 2012 Fife Carers Centre 10am – 1pm

Saturday 25 February 2012 10am - 1pm Cupar Area

Thursday 9 February 2012 6.30 9.30 - Dunfermline Area

Saturday 10 March 2012 10 - 1pm Levenmouth Area

Saturday 17 March 2012 10 - 1pm Glenrothes Area

There are a maximum of 15 places on each of the sessions – so if you would like to come along please give us a call us on 01592 642999 to book a place. If you'd like to attend but need help with alternative care or transport please just give us a call and we'll try to resolve it.

## The Big Plan 2012

The Big Plan brings a group of adults/young people, their friends and families together to explore and plan for their futures. The Big Plan is based around the following question: "What would it take for this man or woman to have an interesting, fulfilling life where they can get to know people who would become their friends and are able to make their contribution to their local community?"

The Big Plan is for anyone who has a learning disability or autism, and is for people aged 14 and upward.

In the Big Plan, the use of person-centred planning tools allows each adult/young person to develop an action plan to achieve their goals and dreams. The Big Plan is spread over 6 sessions to allow plenty of time for development and for the focus person to invite people along who can help support them through the whole process.



Delegates enjoying the 2011 Big Plan event

Parents and Carers enjoyed the 2012 event and found it really helpful- they told us

"Information and hand-outs were very well thought out and easy to understand."

"Great to have input from someone with new ideas.".."It has helped me look at things differently. The suggestions of the other families were helpful.".."This was a very good group. It gave us a good understanding of the many groups that can help the adults/children shape their future.".."This is a good tool to plan for the future".."This is a useful tool to explore transitions for my son or daughter."

ENABLE Scotland would like to hear from anyone who is about to undertake any form of transition and would be interested in taking part in the Big Plan. Similarly if you know of anyone who is interested in becoming a volunteer Family Supporter please contact me; full training and expenses will be provided.

For further information or a referral form please contact:

Debbie McSherry-Schee,

Parents and Carers Training Co-ordinator

Enable Scotland (Fife Services), Alexander House, 5 Alexander Street,

Dysart, Kirkcaldy KY1 2XX

Phone: 01592 659295 or 07889456497

Email: [debbie.mcsherry-schee@enable.org.uk](mailto:debbie.mcsherry-schee@enable.org.uk)

### Cold Weather Payments

During a very cold winter, the costs of heating can quickly add up. Cold Weather Payments are paid to people who are in receipt of certain benefits to help with their additional heating costs during winter. If you're receiving a qualifying benefit, you may be able to get a Cold Weather Payment for each period of very cold weather in your area. You don't need to apply - if you're entitled to this payment you'll be paid it automatically. A payment will be made for each seven-day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March.

### Winter Fuel Payments

Winter Fuel Payments are different from Cold Weather Payments. Winter Fuel Payments are yearly one-off payments to help eligible people pay for their heating in the winter. Winter Fuel Payments are paid to men and women who have reached the minimum age at which a woman can receive a state pension. They are not linked to temperature.



## Keep Well carers

Are you a Carer living in the Fife area?

Between the ages of 40-64 yrs then you may be entitled to a Health Heart Check

- \* Its Free
- \* Its confidential
- \* Trained registered Nurse
- \* At a time and venue that suits you

If you would like to take up this opportunity please contact the Keep well team on 01383565160 or contact the Carers Centre on 01592 642999.

## Do you care for someone affected by dementia? Then this is for you!

The Dementia Learning Forum is a fantastic way for people living with dementia and their carers to come together with a wide range people from voluntary and statutory organisations to learn through both structured talks and informal conversation more about how dementia can affect people, what's around to help cope with many aspects of the condition and to learn where research into the condition is taking us. It also provides an invaluable opportunity for all of these people to share their own thoughts and experiences of dementia in a warm and welcoming environment – not only that but lunch is included as part of the day!

The next Dementia Learning Forum will take place on Tuesday 22

November with the topic "Understanding & managing sexually inappropriate behaviour.". It will take place in the Gilvenbank Hotel in Glenrothes between 11.30am and 2.30pm.

To book a place on this or any future forums or to be placed on the information distribution list please contact Sandra Anderson on Tel: 01592 226768 or Email:Sandra.Anderson-lmu@fife.gov.uk.

The topics planned for the forthcoming sessions include Musical Memories, Vision Loss and Dementia, Legal Aspects of making decisions on behalf of someone living with Dementia. The forums are held every couple of months the few dates being 31 January, 27 March and 24 April 2012.

**We look forward to seeing you there!**



## “Me time “ for you.

Over the past few years many of our carers have benefited from various stress reduction therapy sessions organised through the Carers Centre to help them cope with the stress of caring. During a 5-week period starting in January 2012 Adam Smith Students studying complementary and holistic therapies will be offering carers who use Fife Carers Centre the opportunity to experience a range of therapies. You must be able to commit to coming along to the centre at the same time each week for these 5 weeks.

If you have never experienced any of the therapies you might wonder what use they might be in your situation – carers who have tried the therapies have told us:

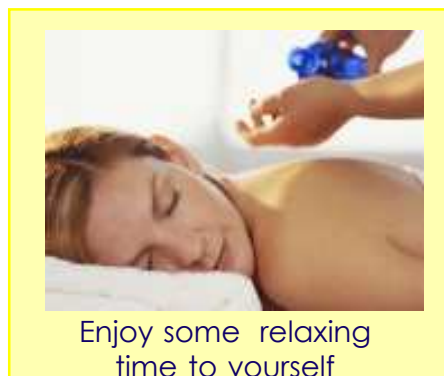
“It was wonderful to have some time for me. It was a very worthwhile experience and I would recommend it for everyone”

“I find it easier to focus on the person I care for”

“ Having the sessions helped to remind me of the importance of thinking of my needs”

“The therapy sessions were truly out of this world! Thank you for giving me the opportunity to experience this”

So if you are a carer or know a carer who would benefit from this experience please get in touch on 01592 642999 to book a place. There are a limited number of places, so it's first come first served!



Enjoy some relaxing time to yourself

## Calling all carers of adults with a learning disability!

### Healthy Lifestyle Programmes

Following on from the development of the Health Improvement Strategy for adults with learning disabilities family carers who support people in Fife with a learning disability are invited to join a fun and interactive four week informal group session around eating well and being active.

The sessions will focus on healthy eating, meal planning and cooking. Information and materials will be provided including recipes to support the sessions. We will also look at the benefits of physical activity and what is available in the area to access.

Three four week pilot programmes are proposed across Fife with dates, times and venues to be confirmed in the next month. It is proposed these sessions will be running from January to March 2012.

If you would like more information on the healthy lifestyle pilot and are interested in participating we would be delighted to hear from you. If you would like to note your interest or require further information please contact Julie Burza, Health Promotion Officer on 01383 565497/5334 or email her at [julieburza@nhs.net](mailto:julieburza@nhs.net)

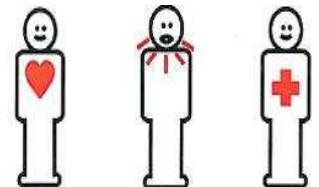
### Cecilia steps out!

After reading about "Stepping out" breaks in the August Issue of the newsletter carer Cecilia King decided she would give it a go. After arranging for her husband to spend some time in respite she set off on her adventure. Her weekend started on Friday 7 October when she travelled to Edinburgh by train and met up with the other 11 women and 3 male carers who were also signed up for the weekend at Waverley Station. From there they travelled together to Linlithgow and on to the Low Port centre. She told us "The weekend was really good, there were relaxing activities like massage as well as activities like silkscreen painting and archery. The food was excellent!" On the Saturday evening the group went out for the evening to a local hotel. The centre was a very busy place with lots of other activities going on. "I enjoyed it so much I'm hoping to go again in May!" Says Cecilia.

If you are a carer and you'd like to try one of these weekends yourself you can contact Care for Carers direct on 0131 661 2077 to ask about taking part in a "Stepping Out" weekend.



### Challenging Behaviour Management Training for Parents and Carers



This training has been successfully delivered across fife in 2011. Parents thought this was very useful in de-escalating challenging situations, giving you the skills needed to defuse and redirect an individual who is challenging. The training provides techniques to parents/carers to ensure care, welfare, safety, and security.

- Are you a parent/carers of a person who has a learning difficulty/disability? (eg ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Disorder?)
- Does the person you care for present behaviour that is challenging?
- Would you like to learn some behaviour management strategies and techniques?

Then this training programme is for you and its FREE!

If you are interested please contact me for more information and a referral form  
Debbie McSherry-Schee

Parents & Carers Training Co-Ordinator and NVCI Certified Training Instructor

Email: [debbie.mcsherry-schee@enable.org.uk](mailto:debbie.mcsherry-schee@enable.org.uk)

Office: 01592 659295 Mobile: 07889456497

## Are you ready for winter?

Weather forecasters are predicting that this winter could well be as bad as last years so have a quick look at our suggestions and see if you're winter ready!

1. Is your home insulated and draught proofed? It's expensive to get your house warm so don't let any of that heat escape! Call the Home Energy Scotland Hotline on 0800 512 012 for your own free personalised home energy check. They'll give you advice and help on saving energy in your home and let you know if you are eligible for any grants or funding to help improve your home's energy efficiency.
  2. Check your eligibility for the 'flu jab. If you are a carer or are over 65 or have a serious medical condition it is likely that you will already have been offered the injection.
  3. Make sure that you always have sufficient repeat medication to last you for at least a week just in case wintry conditions mean you can't get to the doctors or pharmacy.
  4. Will your home welcome winter visitors safely? Get ready for snow and ice on walks and driveways with a snow shovel and de-icing compound as well as water-proof floor mats for inside your front and back doors.
  5. Household emergency supplies should include enough food, water and supplies to last four days without power or help. Check your home emergency kit against this basic checklist:
    - Food that doesn't require heating or refrigeration, such as canned meats, soups and stews, cereal, and energy bars.
    - Manual can opener.
    - 1 gallon of water per person per day (allow enough for four days).
    - Torches and batteries and a battery-powered radio.
    - Mobile telephone.
    - First-aid kit.
    - A week's supply of prescription medicines.
    - Blankets and cold-weather clothing for each family member.
    - Pet food and additional water for household pets.
    - A list of important contact numbers.
- Check you have ice scraper, jump leads, mobile phone, blanket, drinking water, torch and batteries, small shovel, first aid kit.
  - Make sure that all the passengers have warm outerwear clothes, gloves, hats and boots.



### On the road

Winter transportation can mean ice, snow, and hazardous roads. Road conditions can change in an instant. Before travelling, give your car a quick checkover



Last winter's heavy snow caused problems for motorists and pedestrians alike.

- Check antifreeze.
- Check and replace older batteries.
- Remember to keep the fuel tank near full to avoid freezing water in the fuel line.
- Check tires and spare tire for proper inflation.
- Carry a bag of sand, road salt or non-clumping cat litter. The bag's extra weight means better traction, and the contents can be spread under slipping tires.

**Most importantly - whether at home or on the road don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it.**



## Dates for your Diary

### Carers Monthly Lunch Meetings

These meetings take place in Fife Carers Centre on the last Friday of the month (except December) between 12 noon and 2pm. They are open to carers to come along without booking. Each meeting includes a guest speaker, a fun quiz and the chance to enjoy some like minded company over a few sarnies and a cuppa. The guest speakers for the next few Carers monthly lunch meetings are:

Friday 25 November 2011- Ben Hall from Shared Care Scotland talking about Short Breaks.

Friday 27 January 2012 - Caroline Stephenson from Fife Elderly Forum talking about their Advocacy work.

Friday 24 February 2012 - Mike Small from Fife Diet talking the benefits of eating locally grown food.

Friday 30 March 2012 - Homes4Good talking about the work that they are doing around Fife.

## ITEMS FOR SALE

These items are all offered for sale by carers who no longer need them. In all cases please phone Fife Carers Centre on 01592 642999 for contact details of the seller.

**13 Step Straight Stairlift** - For fitting on the right hand side of a staircase in excellent condition.

**Bellavita portable bath seat:** In good condition this bath seat is 2 years old and comes with its own rechargeable battery. It is a lightweight solution to enabling someone with restricted movement to enjoy a bath. The price is negotiable with the seller.

**Milford Person Lift:** This device enables you to lift someone from their wheelchair into a vehicle and out again. It fits all cars, including small ones, with a minimum of adaptation (there are 3 companies in Fife that can do this). It comes complete with 2 slings and a carry bag. £900 o.n.o.

**4 Wheeled Rollator** - in excellent condition, offers when viewed.

**Craftmatic motorised Scooter** - with new batteries, £400 o.n.o

**Single Disabled Bed** - Offers when viewed.

**Motorised Riser/Recliner** arm chair - £500 - Cintique Winchester model in good clean condition.

### FREE TO A GOOD HOME

Electronic armchair in gold fabric and beech wood finish.

Hospital style high back firm support chair in blue fabric with beech wood finish.  
(must be uplifted by recipient)

### Items wanted!

After the last issue of the newsletter several carers who were interested in the following items got in touch with Fife Carers Centre just a bit late and missed out on getting them - so if you have one that you would like to sell let us know and we will put you in touch!

Folding Wheelchair(s), Heavy duty powerpack for a wheelchair,  
Folding electric scooter (so it'll fit in the car boot), Electric adjustable bed.