

Cornerstone News

Festive Edition – let's celebrate!

Christmas 2023



Providing care
and support in
your community

Celebrating the
Star Awards!



Welcome!

Seasons greetings and welcome to our festive newsletter!

As we draw to the end of 2023 it's a good time to look back at the year and celebrate some of our successes, particularly during what has been a challenging time for the sector. In fact I think that's even more reason to recognise some of the fantastic things going on across Cornerstone whether that's individual tales of achievement of the people we support, enthusiastic and committed fundraising or external recognition for some of the brilliant work of colleagues across the organisation.

This edition will be focussing on our annual Star Awards which we were delighted to host at the Apex Hotel in Dundee, it really was a glittering occasion and the theme, superheroes, couldn't have been more apt. I hope you'll enjoy reading and seeing what a fantastic day it was.

We don't have room to cram in all the other great things that have happened this year but some other highlights have included being the first social care organisation to receive the Menopause Friendly accreditation and the amazing and well deserved news that our Shared Lives service was awarded Highly Commended in the recent Great British Care Awards, a truly brilliant achievement and one which the whole team are rightly proud of.

You'll all know that Cornerstone provides support to people across Scotland 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. That means we will have many colleagues who will be working over the festive period. For those of you who are, I do hope you get the opportunity to spend time with those who are special to you and from everybody across the organisation I want to say thank you, whatever your role and wherever you are, for all that you do. And to the people we support and your families and loved ones, I hope you all have the merriest of Christmases!

Here's to an exciting 2024!



Hazel Brown
CEO, Cornerstone



Cover story!

Our front cover features Kerryann with her baby Lily from our Shared Lives service in Irvine, Ayrshire. Kerryann was the Mary Williamson Award winner for Ayrshire at this year's Star Awards.

You can read more about Kerryann and Lily's story on [page 4](#).



Help Cornerstone shine! Join our Board!

Would you like to be a guiding star and help us in our mission to ensure the people we support live the best life possible? [Then why not think about joining our Board in 2024?](#)

We have a number of current Board vacancies and are particularly keen to hear from those with skills, knowledge and experience in one or more of the following areas;

- Management experience in social care quality standards, compliance, commissioning and/or procurement
- Senior management experience in the social work/social care sector preferably with strategic planning skills
- Accountancy/financial experience preferably at management level
- Personal experience of providing care and support of a relative or carer of a person who has experience of care

To learn more or apply for a position on our board, please head to our [vacancies portal](#).

Join the team of Cornerstone Stars in 2024. Find out about 'Coach to Care!'

As the first social care organisation in Scotland to achieve Menopause Friendly Accreditation, we are excited to launch our bespoke 'Coach to Care' hiring programme.

This initiative is designed to support women over 40 who are either looking to return to the workplace after a period of at least six months, or who are currently in employment but keen to transfer into a role within the social care sector.

If you would be interested in finding out more, you can read more here. It's your time to shine!



Independently accredited
menopause friendly
employer





We recently held our Star Awards at the Apex Hotel in Dundee to celebrate the significant achievements of colleagues and the amazing people they support across the country.

Almost 70 colleagues from across the country were recognised for ten, twenty or thirty years of service, representing a cumulative 980 years of dedication and commitment! Presentations were also made for Colleague of the Year, Team of the Year, Learner of the Year and Fundraiser of the Year.

Celebrating the



Guests were also treated to a sparkling performance by long service colleague Neil Crawford who is Branch Administrator at the Dundee office. Neil had penned a very special song entitled 'Not every hero wears a cape', in honour of the occasion.

A number of very special Mary Williamson Awards were also presented to the people Cornerstone supports, by the Lord Provost of Dundee, Bill Campbell.



The Mary Williamson Awards 2023



The Mary Williamson Awards were founded in memory of the late Mary Williamson, who was supported by Cornerstone for over 23 years and left a generous legacy to the charity. Mary enjoyed dressing up, holidays and parties and she was much loved. **The awards pay tribute to her zest for life and are designed to recognise the personal goals and achievements of the people Cornerstone support.**

These goals include;

- A personal health challenge or fitness goal
- A fundraising event
- A training course or employment opportunity
- A new craft, hobby or activity
- Facing a fear
- An act of kindness to others

31 fantastic nominations were received for the Mary Williamson Awards, with each winner receiving £250, a medal and a certificate. Runners-up received £100, a medal and a certificate. Several highly commended awards were also made.

The winners, runners up and highly commended recipients for the Mary Williamson Awards 2023 were;

Shared Lives



Winner – Kerryann Meehan

Kerryann Meehan is supported by her Shared Lives carers Sandra and Stephen in Irvine, Ayrshire. **In September 2022, Kerryann found out that she was going to become a Mum!** With support from Sandra and Stephen Kerryann attended many health appointments, including those with her safeguarding midwife, regular baby growth scans and classes to learn how to bath, feed and make up baby bottles. On the 22nd of May, Kerryann gave birth to a healthy baby girl called Lily weighing 6 lbs and 10 ounces. Both mum and baby were well, and it was a shared special, emotional, and proud moment for everyone involved. Since then, Kerryann has continually proved to be an incredible mum who always puts her daughter first!

Runner up – Duncan Murray

Duncan lives in the Scottish Borders and has a passion for the great outdoors.

After a placement gardening at a local estate, he was accepted onto a gardening apprenticeship with Scottish Borders Council. During this time, he attended college which involved (with the support of his carers Doreen and John Murray) a 6am bus taking him almost 20 miles! **Duncan received his MA Parks, Gardens and Green Spaces certificate and when his apprenticeship was ending, he saw a full-time position was available which he applied for and was successful in securing!** Duncan has been described by his nominator as an enthusiastic, hardworking, determined, and lovely natured young man and the Shared Lives community are enormously proud of everything he has achieved.



Aberdeen North and Shire

Winner – Wayne Eddie

Wayne's nominator shared "Wayne put a lot of time and effort into preparing himself for the 18 mile Kiltwalk with his support practitioners. **He has shown improvements to his health and wellbeing and should be massively proud of his achievements.** Wayne really enjoys going to see different shows and would use his prize money to get tickets to see more!"



Runner up – Rosheen Martin

Rosheen set herself a fitness challenge and has been working hard to achieve her goals by attending her local gym and swimming twice a week. Rosheen can often be found out walking with her support practitioners to help reach her goal and like Wayne also took part in the Aberdeen Kiltwalk!

Aberdeen South and Shire

Winner – Lindsey Telfer

Lindsey has been supported by the Crudenlea team for over 12 years. She has always had a keen interest in keeping fit and active. Her limited mobility certainly does not stop her from working hard on her fitness goals.

During the COVID lockdown Lindsey began working with a personal trainer doing weekly Zoom video calls. Lindsey worked hard and raised over £2,000 for Cornerstone, by walking a total of 9,975 metres in her walking aid, by taking on Captain Tom's Walking Challenge.

Lindsey swims every week and has a new personal trainer who she trains with in the gym. She is always positive and willing to try new ways to adapt her workouts. Her personal trainer is incredibly pleased with how hard she works and how she is always up for trying new exercises. Spending time on her fitness has given her the confidence, ability, and drive to reach her goals and meet new people who share the same hobby.

Lindsey really enjoys fundraising and would love to complete more fundraising events such as the Kiltwalk in her wheelchair and Swimathons to continue to raise money for Cornerstone.



Runner up*

A very talented lady that resides at Bob Cooney Court uses her knitting skills to make blankets for newborn babies at her local hospital's maternity ward. When she is out shopping, she always keeps her eyes peeled for new colours of wool to use for her creations. During lockdown when she was unable to leave her care home, she used her time indoors to create many blankets for babies who needed them. She now shares her craft by teaching her support staff how to knit with patience and kindness.

"This very talented lady is always thinking of others who are vulnerable and in less fortunate circumstances than herself. She gets really emotional and knitting the blankets is her way of giving back and supporting those in need."

**Name withheld for consent and confidentiality reasons*



Winner – Jon Wylie-Quinn

Jon started to receive community support from Cornerstone's Ayrshire branch last year. Due to a number of illnesses Jon spent six months in a rehabilitation ward where he worked hard to regain abilities that he lost. Upon leaving he became very reluctant to go out in his community. Jon has continuously challenged himself and pushed himself out of his comfort zone. He now regularly takes part in outdoor activities such as attending the weekly disco and getting his team to dance alongside him, taking centre stage at community karaoke, and showing off his fantastic pool skills. Jon has developed a great relationship with staff and other people we support within the community support service. **His independence has really grown whilst having a positive attitude and outlook upon life.**

Runner up – Shannon Brannigan

Shannon has been receiving support from Cornerstone for five years. She built trust with her support staff who learned to read her body language and displays affection towards them. After COVID restrictions, Shannon struggled to take part in community activities again. Her support staff trialled respite care in the comfort of her home, which was a roaring success and Shannon now displays a huge increase in her independence and confidence.

Shannon went on her first ever holiday where she loved the evening entertainment and roller-skating discos. She now regularly goes on long bike rides, attends beach barbeques with new friends and loves water activities with her mum.



Winner – Eric Nicholson

Chatty Eric has been described as part of the fabric of his village where everyone knows him, and he knows everyone. Not shy of demanding work over the years, you could find Eric working in the laundry in the hospital, being a bottleman in his local pub or behind the counter in the local chip shop. Eventually Eric took on the role of paper shredder for the Glasgow Cornerstone office for around 10 years working in both the old Sydney Street office and our new Templeton office. Eventually Eric decided it was time to hang up his shredder and retire on his own terms. **He has been nominated for his dedication to his roles throughout his life, his ability to thrive in challenging situations and his positive attitude and kind nature.**



Runner up – James Smith

In December last year, James' beloved home was unfortunately flooded after a pipe burst in the home above his own. Following this, James had to uproot his life, moving to various places over a 6-month period and is now living within our Springvale care home. **James has carried on through this time without complaint whilst taking it in his stride.** At 82 years old and with the help and support of staff James is now showing signs of hope in the hunt for his new home.

Winner – Ryan Cormack

Ryan is supported by our Glebe Road Service and he has been nominated for a number of reasons. One huge achievement is that Ryan faced his fear of snakes by not only standing next to one but eventually touching it (!) on a visit to Deep Sea World, with the support of Emma.

Ryan also set himself the challenge of holding a barbeque party for his friends and family. He chose a date, made a guest list, created the invitations and decorations, and chose what food to cook for his guests.

Not only did Ryan set up and throw a spectacular garden party, he even helped with the clean up! Ryan's support staff have described him as cheeky, funny and a pleasure to be around.



Runner up – Michael Norton

Mikie is supported by our Fod Street housing team and has been nominated for how well he has coped with changes within his support team. Usually, he feels safe with people who he has built relationships with, however due to quick changes he had to adjust to being supported by new staff members.

Mikie has been described as a star throughout this period and helped his new support staff by teaching them his communication style and how he likes to complete his household tasks. Mikie has continuously showed improvement in his confidence and social skills even taking staff to some of his favourite adventure spots such as South Queensferry, Costa coffee and even to the airport for a tour!

Winner – Paige Donnelly

Paige has been described as a very engaging young woman, who loves to meet new people and take on new challenges. She has been supported by her team to gain skills to live independently with her brother. Paige loves ghost tours, gothic markets, Animé and is prone to a trip to Wagamamas for delicious food!

Over the last year Paige has gained lots of confidence even starting a new college course in Hospitality Skills, joined her local gym and booked an exciting holiday to Amsterdam!



Runner up – Martin Devine

Martin recently moved into his own tenancy from his parents' home and has overcome all the challenges that come with living alone. Martin is supported through the night with Technology Enabled Care and a small package of additional care during the week, and he is flourishing! He has been engaged and always made sure to seek support whenever he has needed it. Martin absolutely loves to get out and about and always gets involved in his local events, parties and recently organized

North Lanarkshire Supported Living

Winner – Liam Cairns

Liam has been living independently in his home since October 2009 and in December last year he welcomed a new neighbour Jamie. When Liam popped over to introduce himself to Jamie they discovered a shared love for going to the cinema and are huge fans of Harry Potter on the Playstation. The bond they share has only grown from there and the two can regularly be found going out for lunch together, taking cinema trips, attending fitness classes at the local sports centre or down at the disco. The pair recently set up a weekly walking group where they keep everyone up to date for the next adventure. **Liam has shown huge growth in his confidence and his social skills and friendships are flourishing.**



Runner up – Alan Thomson

Alan is based in North Lanarkshire Supported Living and is known for his lovable creative character and excitement for performing. He would love to present live TV and recently had a brush with fame with his All-Stars Drama Group. Alan doesn't let his hearing impairment hold him back from his passion for acting and recently took part in a movie and performed like the star he is. **Not only that but Alan's movie premiered in the Glasgow Film Theatre where he got to walk the red carpet in his snazzy red suit.** Alan's confidence grew throughout this experience where he also learnt new skills, met new friends, and became more independent.



Claire Sim from North Lanarkshire Supported Living was also awarded a very well deserved Highly Commended certificate.

West Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute

Winner – Sophie Taylor

Sophie moved into Waterfront Housing Support in 2019 and always kept herself busy with friends, clubs, and events. When COVID restrictions stopped Sophie attending many of the activities she loved, **she took to finding new adventures and things to challenge herself with; such as horse riding, joining a choir, and volunteering in Morrisons.** Sophie set herself the goal to lose weight to continue her horse-riding journey. She now follows her Slimming World diet plan and cooks her own meals.



Runner up – Aspen Bennet

Aspen has been supported by our team at Waterfront Supported Living since July 2022.

She was excited to gain more independence and has since built strong friendships with her housemates and team. **She frequently goes out on activities and has made a personal plan PowerPoint for her goals, including visiting the set of some of her favourite Soaps, to go swimming and to cook and bake more!** She is a huge Rangers fan and there is always football banter within the house...she is keen to get back to playing power wheelchair football as soon as she can.

Aspen has achieved so much in the year she has been at the Waterfront, and the team all look forward to seeing what adventures lie ahead for her.



Alan Meehan from our West Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Branch was also awarded a very well-deserved Highly Commended!

Scottish Borders



Winner – Megan Bilisland

Megan is supported by our Tweedbank Branch. She has been working at the Aquarius Hair Design salon for 18 years. In this time, she has successfully completed formal training, attended industry specific courses, hair shows, seminars, competitions, and award events - even winning some of them! She has been described by salon owner Morag as a very reliable, committed, professional, polite, and cheerful person. **She is a well-known face who brings smiles to everyone in the community.**

When she is not busy in the salon, Megan also volunteers for Interest Link Borders and Down's Syndrome Scotland—which she recently became an ambassador for.

Runner up – Scott Goodfellow

Scott lives on a farm with his mother in the Borders just outside Hawick and is supported by Cornerstone's Care at Home and Housing Support teams. They have helped Scott to develop new ways to communicate his emotions and how he is feeling. Scott is very sociable, loves to be around others and make new friends. **He recently joined a drama group and has shown incredible progress in developing his confidence.**



The Mary Williamson Awards are only made possible because of a very generous legacy left to Cornerstone in 2020.

If you would be interested in finding out more about how you can leave a gift to Cornerstone in your Will, please get in touch with Julia Smith on 01224 256018 or email julia.smith@cornerstone.org.uk Julia will be happy to help advise you on next steps and to answer any questions you may have.

Colleague Awards

Colleague of the Year – Operations North

Lynette Hay, Support Practitioner from Cornerstone's Pollaine Service in Aberdeen South and Shire

Colleague of the Year – Operations South

Fiona Gregory, Lead Practitioner, Jigsaw Children's Services in West Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute

Colleague of the Year – Business Support – Yvonne Kelly, Culture Lead

Learner of the Year – Julia Smith, Public Fundraising Manager

Team of the Year – Shared Lives

Fundraiser of the Year – Craigewan Court

Colleague of the Year – Operations North



Lynette Hay's nominator said "**Lynette has worked for Cornerstone for over 20 years and embodies Cornerstone's values.** Having retired in May from her role as support practitioner, she remains in the relief pool and endeavours to help her colleagues and the people we support. She is highly thought of by her fellow support practitioners and has been described as caring, professional, and kind—not only showing this level of care to the people she supports but also to her team.

Lynette arranged for one of the people we support's bedroom to be redecorated whilst they were away on a short break from the service. Lynette went out of her way to make all the arrangements for the decoration and to upgrade the wash basin unit. Lynette even donated the wallpaper as she had some which matched the rest of the decorations. Lynette also came in on her days off and switched shifts to ensure the room was ready and welcoming for when the person we support returned."

Unfortunately Lynette was unable to attend the ceremony. **Pictured are worthy runners up Linda Crighton and Ashley Aitken.**



Congratulations to Mark Wilkes, Laura Robinson and Tracey Wilson who were all awarded Highly Commended in this category.

Colleague of the Year – Operations South



Fiona Gregory's nominator explained "Fiona came into her position with our Jigsaw service during a transition period and quickly learned the ropes. She worked as a solo lead practitioner for several months during which she formed relationships with the people we support and their families which resulted in excellent Customer Feedback forms. Her prior knowledge of working with children with additional needs has been invaluable, and she has overseen purchasing equipment and sensory toys designed for children with autism.

Fiona is a supportive and caring manager of staff. She understands the "bigger picture" of why a person may struggle emotionally and shows great insight into mental health needs. She is fair and rational in her decision making and works to find the best resolution to benefit all."

Huge congratulations to Fiona as well as runners up **Carly Nesvat and Emma Dullick.**

Colleague of the Year – Business Support

Yvonne Kelly's nominator shared "**Yvonne is one of our Culture Leads at Cornerstone who continuously encourages positivity and kindness.** In addition to this role in late 2022, Yvonne became the Glasgow and East Dunbartonshire Interim Branch Leader. She made instant positive relationships with her Service Leads, who were impressed with her skills, hard work ethic and empathy for others. During this period, she spent time finding new and innovative ways of doing things better. She offers support to her colleagues inside and outside of work and consistently provides expert guidance and strategy to Service Leads to take forward to the people we support. Yvonne is very passionate about giving the people we support the best possible care so they can live their best lives possible."

Yvonne is pictured alongside worthy runners up Holly Clark and Sonia Jordan.



Congratulations to Jacinta Young and Michalis Filippou who were both awarded Highly Commended in this category.

Learner of the Year

Julia Smith, Public Fundraising Manager at Cornerstone, achieved her Diploma in Fundraising (with Merit) by the Chartered Institute of Fundraising in April 2023, after 13 months of hard work, commitment, and dedication.

Julia's nominator shared "**Not only is Julia's qualification a significant personal achievement, but it also adds strength to Cornerstone's fundraising team as a whole.** Branch colleagues can be assured that best advice and support is available and the people we support can be assured that she always has their best interests at heart. Even though Julia has a young family with two energetic boys she sacrificed many weekends to complete this qualification, juggling work, school commitments, holidays and more. Julia recognises the importance of fundraising and what it can mean to the people we support. Through having this qualification available within the team, Cornerstone's fundraising is strengthened, risk is reduced, and more money can be raised for the people we support, helping them to live the best lives possible!"

Unfortunately Julia and runner up Stephanie O'Brien couldn't attend the ceremony but runner up Leanne Holmes is pictured collecting her award.



Team of the Year

Cornerstone's Shared Lives team cover eight local authority areas across central Scotland and the Scottish Borders and have been operating for over 23 years. Their nominator shared "Shared Lives contracts have been extended due to the quality of service, financial benefits and outcomes achieved through this model of care. The support given has diversified to include support for adults with learning difficulties, autism or additional support needs, young people transitioning over from foster care as well as two parent and baby arrangements. The team are passionate about their work reputation and have developed positive relationships with carers, families, and professionals. The team adopts a solution-focused approach to support and empower both the carers and supported people to achieve their goals and ambitions. Everyone is very much consulted and involved in the entire process".

Congratulations to Glasgow Branch Admin team who came 2nd, and joint 3rd—Meg's Team and Connects Hub.



Hazel Brown, Chief Executive of Cornerstone commented:

"Huge congratulations go to all our award winners, runners up and those awarded Highly Commended. What a wonderful day, with a very apt, 'Superhero' fancy dress theme! It was great to be able to gather everyone together and celebrate the great work that Cornerstone does across the country, providing vital care and support to people with learning disabilities, autism and complex care needs and helping them to live their best possible lives! Many thanks also to our sponsor CNR International for their very generous donation and to Barry Duncan for presenting our Fundraiser of the Year award".

Fundraiser of the Year

The Fundraiser of the Year award went to the amazing team at Craigewan Court in Peterhead whose recent fundraising effort resulted in the purchase of a minibus to help transport people they support on trips and outings. Their nominator said "Craigewan are well known for fundraising in their local community, when they have a prize bingo it is often sold out within the first week! The families of people Cornerstone support and staff all get involved and the people supported make craft items throughout the year to sell. When an event is announced they are inundated with prizes, baked goods, offers of help and local businesses give generously too. The level of dedication to help raise funds for the people at Craigewan Court is inspiring and they deserve recognition for all the hard work they do".

Linda Crighton was able to collect Craigewan's Fundraiser of the Year award. Runner up Amanda Caulfield was unable to attend, but also pictured are the other runners up, Team Berrybank.



Long service recognition

Congratulations also to the following long service colleagues who were also recognised at the Star Awards:



Long service recognition

20 years

Kathleen Hinds
June McKechnie
Elma Cumming
Claire Milne
Marjory Burns
Janet Nimmo
Bruce MacMahon
Jane Docherty
Lynette Hay
Isabelle Docherty
Michael Donnelly
Hugh Irwin
Bridget Jones
Linda Lowe

Donald Hamilton
Diana Gauld
Yvonne Kelly
Hodan McGregor
Susan Munro
Lorraine Strachan
Moyra Phin
Maureen Sidlow
William Black
Catherine MacLeod
Lorraine Lancaster
Carol Masterton
Annie Love



10 years

Ann Smith
Nicola Alexander
Tasmin Clarke
Claire Nagle
Stephanie Mason
Tracy Calder
James Sherry
Karen Smyth
Jordan Cook
Jamie Tuckwood
Suzanne Daubney
Margaret Scoular
Laura Benton
Pamela Kennaway

Kirsty Wilson
Marilyn McFadyen
Barbara Russell
Katherine Lewendon
Jacqueline Burns
Sarah Wilberforce
Janine Anderson
Carlene Tang
Laurence Timney
Susan Woods
Louise Donald
Christopher McLean
Elaine McNee
Dorothy Bryden

Jillian Barron
Letson Hwaire
Samantha McDonald
Catherine McGowan
Neil Crawford
Anne Campbell
Brian Kiernan
Billie Thompson
Ashley Filson
Philippa Barron
Gemma Clark
Sarah Stewart
Michelle Robertson

Congratulations go to all of Cornerstone's 2023 Star Award winners, runners up, highly commended recipients, nominees and long service colleagues.



With grateful thanks to our loyal event sponsor **CNR International** and **Barry Duncan, Managing Director & Vice President Finance.**



And **Malcolm Reid** from **Complete IT Systems** who supplied some sweetie cones for everyone to enjoy on the day!

★ If your business or organisation would be interested in exploring other sponsorship or charity partnership opportunities with one of Scotland's leading social care charities, we'd love to hear from you! We've got lots of ideas! Just drop us a line at getinvolved@cornerstone.org.uk and we'd happily set up a time to chat. ★



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