

# Cornerstone

# News

All the most recent news from across Cornerstone

Spring 2024



In this issue:  
**A ministerial visit,  
Shared Lives at the  
Great British Care Awards,  
and much more!**



**Providing care  
and support in  
your community**



# Welcome!

Welcome to our Spring Newsletter which arrives just as the days are getting longer and the snowdrops are beginning to appear, it feels like it's been Winter for a very long time and I'm grateful to start feeling some warmth in the air again.

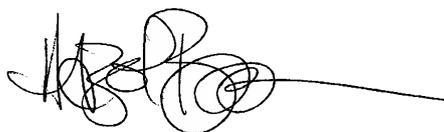
As usual it's jam packed with news from across Scotland so you'll need to pick your own highlights, there are so many! **We started the new year with a visit to Bessie Dunlop Court in North Ayrshire by Maree Todd, the current Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport.** This was a great opportunity to show her the positive changes Cornerstone can make to people's lives and a reminder of the valuable work that social care workers do across the country. That is why we continue to campaign, along with the Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland, for a fair rate of pay for everybody in the sector.

For those of you who'd like to find out more about **Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) and how we plan to implement it across the organisation you'll find a really helpful section about this on page 7.** Implementing this is key to us achieving our strategic aim of being an expert provider, providing the very best of care to the people we support and helping us to continue to make a real difference to their lives.

You'll also find great stories and pictures from across the branches of all the festive activities that were going on, and there were a lot. **Panto's, parties, Christmas dinner dances, it was all happening!**

Finally a reminder for those of you who would like to continue helping to fundraise for Cornerstone, there are loads of helpful suggestions in the newsletter about how you can do this, including details on how you can sign up for this year's Kiltwalks. In these financially challenging times fundraising is more important to us than ever and every little counts, so get on your walking shoes, bake some cakes or climb that mountain, it all helps the people we support to live truly valued lives.

**Happy reading!**



Hazel Brown  
CEO, Cornerstone



## Cover story!

Our front cover features Bessie Dunlop resident Alison with Ayrshire Branch Leader Carly Nesvat and special guest Maree Todd MSP, during a recent ministerial visit to the branch. Miss Todd met some of the fantastic people we support along with some colleagues from Ayrshire.

Read more on **page 1.**

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## A special 'first footer' visits Bessie Dunlop Court

Early in January we were delighted to welcome **Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport to Bessie Dunlop Court in Dalry**. Whilst there, Miss Todd had the opportunity to meet a number of the people we support and to chat with some of the Ayrshire winners from Cornerstone's recent STAR Awards.

Maree Todd MSP said:

**"Visiting Bessie Dunlop Court was truly inspiring. It was an honour to meet with Alison, Shannon, Kerryann and of course, baby Lily and to hear their stories whilst seeing the positive impact the services delivered by Cornerstone have had in aiding them to live independently. Everyone at Cornerstone is driven to provide the best possible support and I congratulate all the staff for their dedication and commitment."**

Carly Nesvat, Cornerstone Branch Leader for Ayrshire commented:

**"It was great to have the opportunity to welcome Maree Todd MSP to Bessie Dunlop Court and tell her all about the care and support we provide. As she chatted with staff and the people we support, she was able to hear and see first-hand, the real difference that great social care is making to the lives of the people we support with learning disabilities.**

**We also took the opportunity to stress the significant challenges and pressures currently being faced by the social care sector and the urgent need for an increase in the hourly rate, and additional funding, if our skilled and valued colleagues are to be able to stay in the jobs they love."**

As part of a walking tour of the development, one resident, Alison, invited Miss Todd in for a chat and to meet her cat Leo! Alison was able to give a first-hand account of the opportunities and independence that maintaining her own tenancy at Bessie Dunlop Court has granted her, including allowing her to work part-time within two jobs – one locally within Dalry and one further afield in Clydebank!

David Harkins, Lead Practitioner at Bessie Dunlop Court commented:

**"Our staff are very proud of the services we are able to deliver, providing flexible, person-centred care to the people we support at Bessie Dunlop Court. For some, living here has been absolutely transformative. One individual, who was previously supported on a 2:1 basis within another housing complex, is now able to live with limited hours of support per week in his own tenancy. Another individual who came to Bessie from a long stay ward with tailored support, is now able to have control over his own choices, feeling safe to do so, whilst having support staff on site should he require it.**

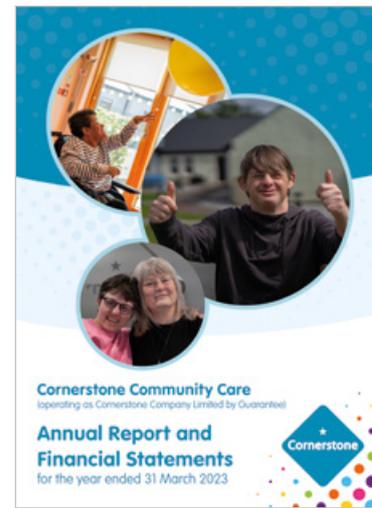
**It was good to hear Miss Todd's recognition of the invaluable care and support we provide and hope that her visit will serve to provide the Scottish Government with even more evidence of the positive impact great social care can undoubtedly have, as well as the imperative need for an adequately funded and resourced sector."**

# Annual Report and Financial Statements

We are delighted to announce that our Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 **are now available on the Cornerstone website**. This new style document celebrates many of Cornerstone's achievements during 2022-23 alongside detailed, supplementary financial information and our Independent Auditor's report.

You can read all about the progress being made with our current 'Future-proofing Cornerstone' strategy and associated programmes of work, as well as the results from our customer satisfaction surveys and Care Inspectorate reports. You can find out more about the number of people Cornerstone supports, the number of registrations and different types of services we have, as well as learn all about our structure, governance and management within the Directors' report.

Of course, there's also plenty of stories and great photographs to enjoy, spotlighting our values-led work, and the positive impact our amazing colleagues across the country continue to have in helping the people we support to live the best possible life!



## A life-changing transplant

Cornerstone started supporting Sarah in Nov 2019 in her own home. Sarah had renal failure and her kidney was not functioning well; she was required to lose three stone to be fit enough to make the transplant waiting list. Sarah and her team have worked incredibly hard over the last few years and Sarah has lost four stone in total, maintaining a healthy diet and exercise routine.

Sarah has required dialysis from Jan 2023, attending the renal unit twice a week, with support from her staff team. Sarah found this challenging but did remarkably well especially when it looked like dialysis wouldn't continue but no one gave up on Sarah, advocating and fighting her corner, sourcing more training, and trying every possible avenue to ensure it continued. The pressure Sarah's team, and Sarah were under cannot be underestimated.

On the 15th of Dec 2023 Service Lead Ashley received a phone call from Sarah's social worker to advise that she had a call from the transplant coordinators to advise there was a potential match for Sarah! The team had years of planning for this moment, adapting countless times, working closely with numerous medical professionals on Sarah's health team and her social workers to have a streamlined and full proof plan.

That night Sarah got her kidney transplant! Staff spent just over a week in hospital with Sarah, taking it in turns for two staff to travel to Edinburgh, handover to the other two staff and come home every three days. Sarah was back home in time for Christmas. Absolutely the best Christmas present for everyone involved!

Sarah continues to do remarkably well; she is just waiting to get back to all her groups after 'shielding' for 12 weeks and has just celebrated her 50th Birthday in February.

Service Lead Ashley Aitken added **"I cannot emphasise enough the immense admiration, pride and respect I have for both Sarah and her team. The team at Packman have been asked time and time again to go above and beyond the call of duty and have always done so without a single complaint.**"



**The dedicated staff team have had to undergo specialist training, in supporting Sarah at dialysis. They needed to know how to check fistula's worked, learn and support Sarah with all the changes in dietary requirements and restrictions, change their plans; work at short notice to attend medical appointments/clinics. Supporting Sarah through all the triumphs and tribulations along the way.**

**I've never seen more exhausted, yet happier (and very, very emotional) staff as I did when I visited Sarah in ERI. The staff were exhausted, required to sleep at Sarah's beside on chairs. You'd never know Sarah had just undergone major, life-changing surgery, she was 'just oor Sarah'. She called me the night after her surgery and I won't lie, I cried when she told me 'I've got a new kidney!'**

**I can't wait to see what Sarah does with her new lease of life, if one thing's for sure – whatever she does it will be amazing!"**



## Rethink to 13

We are proud to support the Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland's (CCPS) Rethink to 13 campaign which calls upon the Scottish Government to rethink commitments on pay for social care staff in the 2024-25 Budget.

The campaign urges the government to increase pay to at least £13 per hour for all social care staff from April, as part of a published timetable to achieve Fair Work.

In the run-up to the Budget being debated and passed at the end of February CCPS members have been sharing views, videos and stories from support workers focusing on the work they do, the impact they make – and the difference investment would have on them and the people they support.

Find out more Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland campaigns at [ccpscotland.org](http://ccpscotland.org)

Or join us on social to support the campaign and share your voice [#RethinkTo13](https://twitter.com/RethinkTo13)

## Awards success



We are so proud of our Shared Lives team who not only were awarded Team of the Year at our own Star Awards but were also recognised with a Highly Commended in the 'Putting People First' Category at the Great British Care Awards (GBCA) in Newcastle towards the end of last year!

Demonstrating their innovative approach to care, and as part of their GBCA nomination, Shared Lives were Highly Commended for recognising that people with learning disabilities have the same rights as anyone else to build a family and for promoting a supported parenting approach. By providing person-centered support, the team were successful this year in supporting two mums who were navigating parenthood; learning new skills in loving homes with Shared Lives Carers and having opportunities to thrive in the right environment.

Kerryann and Baby Lily were one of the families supported:

In September 2022, Kerryann found out that she was going to become a mum! With support from Cornerstone's Shared Lives Ayrshire service and her amazing Shared Lives Carers, Sandra and Stephen, baby Lily was born on the 22nd May 2023. It was a special, emotional, and proud moment for everyone. Kerryann said **"I am loving being a mum, caring for my baby girl and learning as I go. I'm so happy Lily is healthy and thriving, while I start this next journey of being a parent with the support and advice from Cornerstone Shared Lives, and Sandra and Stephen."**



Left to right: The Shared Lives team; Melissa Aitken, Marissa Speed, and Sarah McPhail representing the team at the awards ceremony.

Kerryann has also had the opportunity to share her experience with the Shared Lives Plus parenting project and has been at the helm of new national guidance. She is also influencing the work of Shared Lives schemes across Scotland and the UK.

Shared Lives Family Placement Lead – Marissa Speed commented: **'Statistically between 40–60% of people with learning disabilities who become parents risk having their children removed. Our work has directly shaped new, national guidance 'Supporting Parents in Shared Lives' (Scotland) whilst pioneering closer partnership working with the Safeguarding Midwife Team and future parents. It's really clear from the Shared Lives experience that having the right support at the right time can enable people we support to achieve their aspirations and amazing outcomes.'**



## Calling new Shared Lives Carers

Our Marketing and Communications team were out and about recently interviewing Shared Lives Carers in the Scottish Borders, **for an upcoming campaign that aims to recruit more families, couples or individuals to the Shared Lives network.**

**Huge thanks go to Betty and James, Donna and Dylan and Patricia and Alistair for taking part and sharing their stories.**

Shared Lives is similar to fostering, helping people aged 16 and over with a wide range of disabilities, conditions and other support needs to live in their local community, by matching them with an approved carer. Carers share their home, family and community life with the person they are supporting, whilst providing them with the care they require in an inclusive and homely environment. Every placement is unique, with the support provided being tailored to meet the individual needs of each person. This includes people with learning disabilities or mental health issues, older adults and also young people being supported through transitional services. Placements can be offered on a full-time, short break or day support basis.

Marissa Speed, Family Placement Lead for Shared Lives Borders explains: **“Shared Lives is making a huge difference to the lives of adults with disability and support needs in the Scottish Borders. We have now developed this support and established a Shared Lives community here over recent years and we are now looking to recruit more. Becoming a Shared Lives Carer can be such an enriching experience and we are actively looking for a range of people from diverse backgrounds and with a wide variety of life experiences”.**

Donna and Dave started their Shared Lives Carer journey in 2021. They have been supporting Dylan since late last year and are really enjoying providing the support for Dylan and helping him to develop his skills and interests in his new home and community.

Donna says:

**“Being a Shared Lives Carer is what I believe I was born to do, I have cared for others my whole life. Dylan has very quickly become family. Dave and myself could not imagine our world without him now.”**

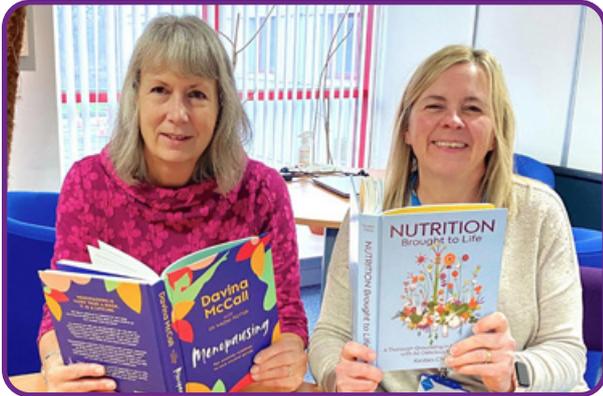
Jackie, Dylan’s mum expressed how appreciative she is of the support that Donna and Dave provide to Dylan. She stated:

**“Our son moved in with Donna and Dave, he loves his Shared Lives family, he is so happy, settled and is supported to access so many different opportunities that are enhancing his quality of life. We have built up a positive relationship with our son’s carers and feel that it is just like having an extended family.**

**Shared Lives made this happen, we felt involved, included, and respected, we can call on them at any time if we have any questions, we are so grateful and so happy.”**

If you think you have what it takes to become a Shared Lives Carer or just want to find out more please contact our Team by emailing: [sharedlivesborders@cornerstone.org.uk](mailto:sharedlivesborders@cornerstone.org.uk) or calling **07783705648**.

# Menopause Friendly accreditation



From left to right: **Debbie Masson and Catriona Allan** with some of our Menopause library books; **Tanya Lund**, Cornerstone's first Women's Health Ally

This year, we were delighted to be the first social care employer in Scotland to achieve full 'Menopause Friendly' accreditation as a mark of our commitment to ensuring Cornerstone is a menopause friendly and supportive employer.

The Menopause Friendly Accreditation is established by **Henpicked: Menopause In The Workplace** and recognises high standards and proven practices that embrace menopause in the workplace. It is an industry-recognised, mark of excellence and is the only accreditation that sets clear standards which must be met in supporting menopause in the workplace.

As part of applying for accreditation, our submission was assessed by an Independent Panel, and **we successfully evidenced effectiveness in six key areas, namely: culture, policies and practices, training, engagement, facilities and evaluation.**

We were recognised for our commitment working towards long-term, sustainable change in our workplace and fostering an inclusive menopause friendly culture. From manager awareness workshops and a raft of online resources, to 'Your Menopause Journey' virtual sessions and the resourcing of lending libraries of books on the topic across our hubs and offices, we have done so much to help raise awareness.

With over 78% of our workforce being female, and 45% being between the ages of 35–55, it is vitally important that we better understand the impact of perimenopause, menopause, and postmenopause and identify ways in which we, as an organisation, can better support those experiencing symptoms.

We are proud to be the first social care employer in Scotland to be accredited and to be part of a group of inspirational, pioneering employers who are changing the way people think about menopause and are putting the right support in place. We have been recognised as an inclusive employer that takes the wellbeing of our colleagues seriously.



Independently accredited  
**menopause friendly**  
employer



"Everyone at Cornerstone is to be congratulated for their excellent achievement in supporting menopause in the workplace," says Deborah Garlick, CEO of Henpicked: Menopause in the Workplace. "They are acutely aware of how being menopause friendly sits at the heart of an inclusive and caring culture. Not only will this benefit all colleagues, but the understanding and awareness will cascade to their work and social communities. Cornerstone is leading by example in the social care sector and I hope many others will be inspired to follow them."

As our two-year funding from the Workplace Equality Fund comes to an end, we were delighted to announce on International Women's Day (8th March), that one of our Support Practitioners, **Tanya Lund, has taken up our first-ever Women's Health Ally role**, to ensure our work into menopause awareness continues. Tanya will help to facilitate the implementation and continuation of projects to raise awareness around women's health and wellbeing, including the menopause.

Tanya tells us a little bit more about her motivation to get involved:

**"I decided to apply for the role of Women's Health Ally, as I believe that the menopause and other health topics can be seen as taboo subjects, despite effecting 50% of the population. Having the knowledge of what your body is going through and what you can do to alleviate some of the symptoms will allow women to continue living their best lives socially and at work. If I can be of some help to spread awareness and empower woman, I'm all for that!"**

Supported by:



# Scottish Government Consultation

The Scottish Government's consultation on Learning Disabilities, Autism & Neurodivergence Bill has been launched. It outlines:

**“People with learning disabilities and neurodivergent people are unique individuals who, like all of us, have potential to develop, skills to offer, and vibrant lives to lead connected to their families and communities. They may think differently and see and experience the world differently. This shouldn't cause them to be marginalised, stigmatised, disadvantaged or excluded”.**

**“Scotland's diversity is our strength. We are committed to building a country that ensures equality of opportunity for all by embedding equality, inclusion and human rights into everything that we do. By better protecting, respecting and championing the rights of**



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**people with learning disabilities and neurodivergent people, all of Scotland can benefit. This consultation on proposals for a Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill seeks the views of everyone on how we can do this”.**

Information about the consultation is available in different formats. [Click here](#) to find out more. You can respond to the consultation online by [clicking here](#). The deadline for all responses is 21st April 2024.

## Recruitment

### Supporting Hiring Managers

Our Recruitment Advisors travelled the length and breadth of Scotland recently **to deliver face to face recruitment workshops to our Hiring Managers across the organisation.**

With a focus on confidence-building, the workshops explored our new Support Practitioner hiring toolkit, shortlisting, interviewing techniques, hiring decision making and communication etiquette to name but a few! In conjunction with the workshops, our Recruitment Advisors also launched a recruitment essentials eLearning course which takes our managers through the whole recruitment and selection process and teaches them how to navigate and get the best out of our applicant tracking system.

Recruitment Advisor Denise Elder said:

**“It was great to get out and about to meet so many of our Hiring Managers recently. Not only will the workshops support their recruitment efforts but they will also help us to deliver a slicker, more efficient and meaningful recruitment process-enhancing the experience for all of our prospective candidates. It truly is a win win!”.**

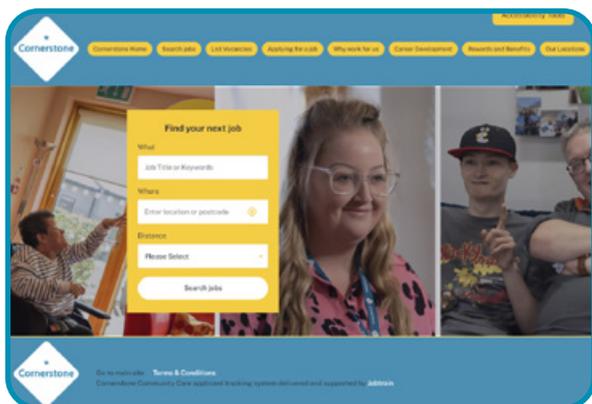


#### Feedback has included:

**“The information provided will enable me to deliver better interviews and gave me ideas on how to include the people we support in our selection process”**

**“Surpassed my expectations, great content and very helpful moving forward. I feel an increased knowledge and think the new toolkit will be great”**

**“Increased knowledge and confidence, improved practise and I will also be involving the people we support more when I recruit for my services”**



### New look candidate portal

Our Recruitment team recently invested in a new look candidate portal with support from our Marketing and Communications Team and ATS provider, JobTrain! **The site went live in February and aims to give prospective candidates an even better experience when applying to work for Cornerstone.** There's access to lots of information about the organisation, as well as hints and tips on our recruitment and selection process and stories from colleagues sharing their career stories. What's even better is it's all in the one place!

We're sure you'll all agree it will help us to stand out as an employer of choice in the social care sector. You can take a look [here](#).

## Recruiting shining stars!

We recently launched a new 'Shining Star' recruitment campaign across our social media channels. Featuring some stories and lots of familiar faces from our latest Star Awards, the campaign encourages prospective candidates from across all of our Branch areas to consider a career in social care and asks **"Could you be Cornerstone's next shining star?"**

With localised ads (shown right) and a short video now live on Facebook and Instagram please like, comment and share where you spot them. Help spread the word - Cornerstone is hiring!

All our local vacancies can be viewed at [Jobtrain](#).



## Training Academy



## Happy, safe and secure

As part of being an expert social care provider it is important our colleagues know how to keep both themselves, and the people we support, safe from harm. **Underpinning this is a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approach; an approach that is recognised as best practice, and is both values-led and evidence-based.**

PBS aims to improve the quality of a person's life by developing a deep understanding of any behaviours that challenge. It uses holistic assessment and person-centred support planning to enhance quality of life outcomes for both the person being supported and their support team. It is also central to our organisational values of being caring, person-centred, professional and pioneering.

As part of adopting a PBS approach it is important that we equip colleagues with the skills and tools to provide the right support at the right time in the right way, helping the people we support to fulfil their potential and live the best life possible. **We are therefore proud to recently partner with IKON to deliver training in conflict resolution and breakaway techniques.** Tim Hanwell, a trainer from IKON, has delivered a number of courses within some of our Branches and our trainers have now been accredited to deliver this course going forward. IKON are registered with UK charity BILD as complying with the Restraint Reduction Network training standards.

The course focuses strongly on de-escalation and conflict management techniques that can be used to help the people we support to regulate their feelings and help them to feel happy, safe and secure. The breakaway techniques taught are used by colleagues to safely remove themselves from a situation that may put them and the person they support at risk, when de-escalation has failed. We believe firmly in giving the people we support choices and control over their everyday lives and through training aim to reduce the likelihood of needing any kind of restraint and restrictive practices. They will only ever be used as a last resort, if every other option has been exhausted.

Working with IKON helps us to take yet another step forward towards becoming an expert provider of care and support to people with learning disabilities, autism, and complex care, allowing us to focus on being proactive in our support, effectively de-escalate behaviours and providing our colleagues with appropriate breakaway techniques when absolutely needed.

**Over the delivered sessions, our colleagues have shown a deep, caring spirit and shared great ideas to implement into the care plans of the people they support with a view to ensuring they are happy, safe and secure.**

# Scottish Apprenticeship Week 2024

We were delighted to support Scottish Apprenticeship Week once again this year (4-8 March). The theme was **'Skills Generation'** recognising the role Scottish Apprenticeships have in harnessing people's skills, talents and abilities, to create the next generation of Scotland's skilled workforce.

**There are currently almost 40,000 apprentices in training across Scotland** and Scottish Apprenticeship Week aims to provide a nationwide celebration of apprenticeships and the benefits of work-based learning to people and employers in Scotland.



**Natalie currently works for Cornerstone as a support practitioner in North Ayrshire Community Support.**

## Why did you decide to do the Modern Apprenticeship?

I chose to do the Modern Apprenticeship to gain new skills and implement them into my practice. It is a requirement to gain the Health and Social Care level 7 in line with the SSSC regulations.

## What sort of skills did you learn?

I gained new knowledge and skills by researching and reflecting on my practice as a support practitioner. It is a personal account kept by each individual within Cornerstone about our experiences and helps us to understand and learn more about each person, as well as how we can make amazing differences to their life.

I wish everyone the best of luck when they undergo their Modern Apprenticeship. Enjoy it, don't stress, and never forget your potential and what you're capable of!

## What was the most rewarding part of your Modern Apprenticeship?

The most rewarding part of my Modern Apprenticeship was realizing how much potential I have. I'm a keen learner and loved looking back at how I have supported people and how I have built positive and meaningful relationships with them. Completing this course in six months was one of the most rewarding and amazing things I have done. It has changed my practice in positive ways and shown what I'm capable of. I couldn't have done it without my assessors.



Cornerstone's Modern Apprenticeship (MA) programme gives people who are looking to pursue or develop a career in health and social care the opportunity to gain a sector recognised qualification whilst working in a paid role as a Support Practitioner. **To celebrate the week, we caught up with support practitioners, Natalie and Colin, to hear all about their Modern Apprenticeship experiences.**



**Colin currently works as a support practitioner in Cornerstone's Bessie Dunlop Court in Ayrshire.**

## What sort of skills did you learn on the Modern Apprenticeship?

The assessments that I needed to complete required reflective written work of my own, combined with spending time studying and reading many documents on employer policy and legislation. To achieve this, I had to develop the skill of disciplining myself to study in my free time and create a study space that allowed me to focus on what I wanted to write. The information and knowledge gained from my studies on legislation and policy surrounding care will enable me to fulfil my role to a higher level. As a person who has spent the last 30 years working in other fields, undertaking a change in career has presented new challenges, however my studies and research have helped me to fill gaps in my knowledge and better understand what is expected of me in my role.

## What was the most rewarding part of your Modern Apprenticeship?

At the age of 50 it had been quite a few years since I undertook a commitment to gain a major qualification. Sitting down, staring at a blank screen was daunting, but the sense of achievement when completing each assessment and watching my progress was the encouragement needed to keep going. Feedback from my assessor Caroline was also essential and rewarding in letting me know that I was on the right track with my submitted work. My next goal is to finesse my Continuous Professional Learning log to bring it up to an even more professional level!

**Congratulations to both Natalie and Colin on completing their Modern Apprenticeship!**

## Skilled and qualified teams

Over the last six months the Training Academy Qualification team has continued to support colleagues across the organisation to achieve SQA qualifications. During this time period fifty one colleagues have completed awards.

- **Care Services Leadership and Management SCQF 10 (1)**
- **Modern Apprenticeships (Social Services and Healthcare SCQF 7 (4))**
- **PDA's in Supervision SCQF 7 (6)**
- **Social Services and Healthcare SCQF 6 (4)**
- **Social Services and Healthcare SCQF 7 (33)**
- **Social Services and Healthcare SCQF 9 (3)**

Through the Training Academy, colleagues have access to robust and ongoing training, equipping them with the skills and knowledge to carry out their job roles effectively. Once colleagues gain work experience and in line with their SSSC registration conditions they are then invited to undertake the relevant qualification for their roles.

Our team work hard to tailor SQA assessments to meet the individual needs of colleagues and this is a real strength of our centre, which the SQA has recognised. Colleagues appreciate the support their Assessors give them:

**"I would like to thank my Assessor Susan for taking the time to help me when I really needed it. I hadn't done anything like this since High School. So thank you again Susan."**

In a recent survey of colleagues who've completed awards with us 100% agreed that **"the assessment was delivered at an appropriate pace"** and 100% agreed that **"completing my SVQ/ PDA has improved my work practice."**

Our Assessor team often work with colleagues throughout their Cornerstone career.

Pam Douglas, Qualifications Centre Manager, comments: **"It's great to see colleagues gaining promoted posts and our Assessor team journeys alongside colleagues when they are ready to undertake their next qualification."**

**"Fiona has been my Assessor for all SVQs completed now within Cornerstone and I just want to say that I think she is great at what she does. thank you Fiona for all the support."**

## Fundraising



## Borders Lunch Club

Cornerstone's Lunch Club is a project which aims to bring people together to take part in an activity and enjoy lunch together, reducing isolation and improving people's wellbeing in the Scottish Borders.

The group which meets monthly and is generously supported by the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund, **recently came together for a Valentine's Day themed party at MacArts – a live music venue in Galashiels within a refurbished former church.**

Attendees enjoyed a party full of food, music, dancing, face paints by Cornerstone's very own Kim Wallis, and, of course, a Conga Line.

This monthly Lunch Club has really made an impact on the people who attend with one saying, **"I like to go to the Lunch Club, because I can see people that I would not always get the opportunity to, plus I like the food and seeing my friends."**

Another attendee, Lisa Nelson, said, **"It's fun being around other people and talking to them, it is helping my anxiety. Everyone talks to you and it's a nice place to go to when you are on your own every day, and people comment about my knitting."**

Cornerstone Branch Leader, Andrew McInnes, said, **"We're thrilled that Lunch Club has provided a way for people we support to come together and make friends over lunch. It's activities like these that can make a real difference in people's lives and it's been wonderful hearing about what they get up to."**

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Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund

## Festive Fun!

Christmas 2023 was an exceedingly busy and exciting time at Cornerstone. Activities kicked off at the start of December with **the launch of Cornerstone's traditional Christmas Raffle.**

The draw was made on Friday 16th December, with a little bit of help from Tamara and Susan at Inchbrae and Santa, who made a surprise visit. Huge congratulations to those who had winning tickets including Lynne Porter, Vaida Tvarijonaite, Margaret McCabe and Stephen Lindsay.

**On 15th December, with thanks to a donation from the W A Cargill Trust, people we support and their staff teams from Glasgow, East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire, and Ayrshire enjoyed the spectacular pantomime Snow White at the Kings Theatre,** joining in with the singing and many of the people we support getting up and dancing in their seats. Family members commented on how nice it was to see so many people from different services come together for a lovely Christmas outing. They also mentioned how thankful they were for their families to be gifted these tickets.

It was an all-round huge success where everyone enjoyed a well-deserved day out to get into the Christmas spirit.

Meanwhile in Aberdeen, the annual Christmas Dinner Dance was well underway at the Beach Ballroom. The event was a roaring success with over 100 supported people from all over Aberdeen City and Shire, their support teams, our colleagues, friends and Board Members dancing the night away. There was even a surprise visit from special guests Santa and Baxter Bear!

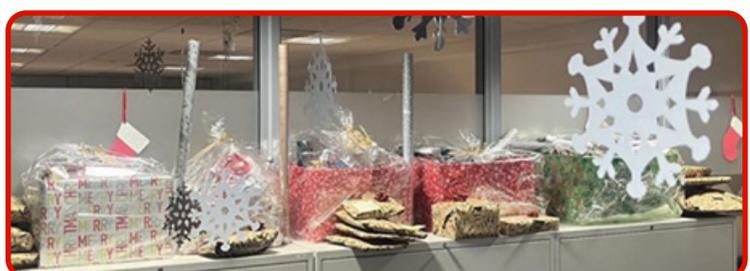
**Thanks to an incredible donation from John Gordon Trust, all our services in Aberdeen South were given the opportunity to attend the Panto at the Aberdeen Arts Centre.**

Throughout December, those who went along got the chance to watch Rapunzel with a tasty ice cream or ice lolly and laugh along with the festive fun. Not only that but Tamara from Inchbrae was lucky enough to get backstage to meet the cast!

And with enough money left over from the kind donation, Santa was able to visit all the services in Aberdeen City South and Shire to drop off individual Christmas presents to the people we support. And to top it all off, an additional generous donation from the Ina Scott Sutherland Trust allowed for a festive hamper to be delivered to each service too!



From top, left to right: Tamara and Susan help Santa with our Christmas Raffle; Glasgow branch's Debbie and Ashleigh preparing for the panto, and Nicholas from our Richmond service enjoying the view with his support team; Tamara meets the cast of Rapunzel; Willie and Clare from our Abbotswell service meeting Santa with their support team; Santa and Baxter Bear arrive at the Christmas Dinner Dance, and Callum from our Angus Court service has a dance with Baxter; Wrapped presents and hampers ready to be delivered to services in Aberdeen and Shire South.





From top: Runners up 'Fisherman's Friends' and our winning team 'Two In Two Out'.

## Quiz-tastic!

The Fundraising Team held their first Quiz Night in several years on Friday 26th January!

Over 50 people attended the event held at the Aberdeen Arts Centre and tested their knowledge over six rounds which included questions on Scotland, TV & Film, Opening Lyrics to Songs, and Food and Drink.

Louise from Team Fisherman's Friends said "We all really enjoyed the quiz. The questions were a really good selection and a good level of difficulty – well done that quizmaster!"

Other fundraising opportunities were available during the evening; Guess the Whisky, Gin Toss and an Olympian style Heads and Tails, all of which helped us raise over £550 for the Quality of Life fund.

Team Keith's Angels has this to say when they heard how much had been raised **"Absolutely brilliant news! We really did have a fantastic evening, please keep us updated with the next events."**

The winning team was 'Two In Two Out' receiving a prize of £100 that they very generously donated back to Cornerstone, with 'Fisherman's Friends' close behind them as runners-up winning £50.

Thank you to everyone who turned out, donated prizes, and helped make the event successful. We look forward to seeing even more of you at the next Quiz!

## Making memories for years to come

We have recently developed a new Legacy Guide to help those interested in leaving a gift to Cornerstone in their Will.

Since 1980, people have helped Cornerstone provide care and support to young people and adults living with learning disabilities, autism and complex needs. Thanks to their generosity, huge strides have been made in the last 40 years, providing pioneering, person-centred care across Scotland, but there's still lots to be done.

By leaving a legacy gift in your Will you'll be ensuring we can continue to be there for people living with disabilities for years to come.

### Mary's gift to the people we support

At the end of 2020, Cornerstone received a truly incredible legacy gift of over £240,000 to support our work from Alexanderina, the mother of the late Mary Williamson, who was supported at Stevenson Court, in Aberdeen.

Mary had Down's Syndrome and was supported by Cornerstone for over 23 years. Mary was very much loved by everyone at Stevenson Court, who have all taken to sharing some fond memories of her recently. 'Mary Doll' – as our Service Manager Malkie liked to call her – will be remembered fondly for her dressing up, and her love of parties and holidays.

The Mary Williamson Awards have been created from this generous legacy donation and serve to celebrate the achievements and personal goals of the people we support across the country, with awards being presented each year at our STAR Awards!



**Making memories for years to come**  
Your guide to leaving a legacy to Cornerstone



### Your Guide to making a gift in Will

No matter how big or small, leaving a gift in your Will is an incredible thing to do to commemorate your life whilst also helping the people we support at Cornerstone.

We'd love to hear about your legacy plans and why Cornerstone means so much to you. **Please contact Julia Smith, Public Fundraising Manager on 0300 131 3333 or by email on [julia.smith@cornerstone.org.uk](mailto:julia.smith@cornerstone.org.uk) and we'll send you a legacy pack.**

# Events and Challenges



## Kiltwalk

Why not join Team Cornerstone and take part in one of this year's Kiltwalks. With three different distances to choose from, there should be a walk to suit all ages, fitness levels and disabilities.

We are now offering a limited number of free spaces for the Dundee & Edinburgh Wee Wander Kiltwalks. To find out more about securing one of these spots for a person we support please contact us at [getinvolved@cornerstone.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@cornerstone.org.uk).

- **Glasgow Kiltwalk** – 28 April 2024 has now sold out! If you're looking to join the waiting list please [click here](#).
- **Aberdeen Kiltwalk** – 2nd of June 2024
- **Dundee Kiltwalk** – 11th August 2024
- **Edinburgh Kiltwalk** – 15th September 2024

Sign up now and raise vital funds to help people living with learning disabilities, autism and complex needs live their best possible lives!



### THE WeeWander

The Wee Wander is 3 miles long and takes an average of 1.5 hours to complete.

### THE BigStroll

The Big Stroll is 14.4 miles long and takes an average of 5 hours to complete.

### THE MightyStride

The Mighty Stride is 22.7 miles long and takes an average of 8 hours to complete.

## Take part and make a difference

Taking on a challenge event is a fantastic way to raise money for Cornerstone. Whether it is a run, walk, cycle or swim, there are lots of events up and down the country for you to sign up to.



### Fancy a bit of adrenaline in 2025?

2024 sees colleagues and supporters signing up to some amazing challenges – we have 5 amazing people volunteering to do a **Sky Dive** on August 6, very brave colleagues signed up to **Ziplide the Clyde** on 13th September and 5 supporters booked on to **Abseil the Falkirk Wheel** in March 2025.

We do not plan to run any more adrenaline events this year but if you would like to put your name forward for a challenge in 2025 please get in touch with Cat Allan from the Fundraising Team on [catriona.allan@cornerstone.org.uk](mailto:catriona.allan@cornerstone.org.uk)

### Or something else?

Whatever you're into – let us know what challenge you'd like to do, and we can help.

Email Cat Allan in the Fundraising Team at [getinvolved@cornerstone.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@cornerstone.org.uk) who would love to hear your plans – or help you make them! Get in touch today if you are interested in fundraising through a challenge event – we are here to help you every step, stroke or turn of the pedal!



### Prefer Running?

If walking is too tame for you, there are **10ks in Glasgow in June, a Men's 10k in Edinburgh in October and the AJ Bell Great Scottish Run in Glasgow in October**. There is still plenty of time to sign up and get training.



# Looking for new goals?

2024



Whether your goal is to keep fit, reach a personal best, conquer your fears or simply have a great day out with friends, family or colleagues – pick a challenge and we'll support you with the rest.

Run, walk, cycle, skydive or do your own thing. What challenge will you take on? We have highlighted just a handful of events you can get involved in this year whilst fundraising for Cornerstone at the same time! You can browse all of our events and challenges on our website, [click here to find more](#).

	Glasgow Kiltwalk	28th April	UK
	Three Peaks Challenge	17th–19th May	Glasgow
	Edinburgh Marathon Festival	25th–26th May	Edinburgh
	Aberdeen Kiltwalk	2nd June	Aberdeen
	Tough Mudder	15th June	Thornhill
	Glasgow Men's and Women's 10k	16th June	Glasgow
	Ben Nevis Trek	5th July	Lochaber
	Go Swim Loch Tay	17th August	Taymouth Marina
	Ben Nevis Midnight Trek	19th August	Lochaber
	Dundee Kiltwalk	20th August	Dundee
	Go Swim Loch Lomond	31st August	Balloch
	Go Swim Loch Morlich	14th September	Glenmore
	Edinburgh Kiltwalk	17th September	Edinburgh
	Banchory Beast	21st September	Banchory
	Great Scottish Run	6th October	Glasgow
	Mens 10K Edinburgh	22nd October	Edinburgh
	Supernova Forth Road Bridge	2nd November	Forth Road Bridge
	Virtual Dog Jog	Anytime	Virtual event

**Something else? Let us know! We'd love to hear your ideas so get in touch and we'll help you shape your bespoke challenge!**

By joining in our fundraising efforts you will make a huge difference to the lives of young people and adults living with learning disabilities, autism and complex care needs.

To register for a place and get support with fundraising please contact us on **01224 256 000** or at [getinvolved@cornerstone.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@cornerstone.org.uk).

# Cornerstone

WEEKLY LOTTERY

We were delighted to officially launch our weekly lottery in 2023 with help from Ryan and Mikie, two of the amazing people that Cornerstone support in our Dundee Branch!

If you would like to support people like Ryan and Mikie then why not sign up to our lottery in 2024? Money raised goes towards helping the people we support to live their best possible lives! **For just £1 a week, players can win a jackpot prize of £25,000!**

## How to play

To play you must live in Britain and be over 18. You can [enter online today](#).

Once registered, You'll be sent a six-digit lottery number which is selected at random. This will be unique to you for as long as you play. And you can have more than one chance and number if you wish.

Our draws take place every Friday and the result will be published on [the winners page](#).



18+ BeGambleAware.org

For every £1 raised from our lottery, 50p goes directly to helping Cornerstone to care for people with learning disabilities, autism and complex care needs.

Sign up today at [weeklylottery.cornerstone.org.uk](https://weeklylottery.cornerstone.org.uk) Participation is subject to [terms](#).

Please gamble responsibly.

# Cornerstone



Providing care and support in your community

# DISCO

Back for 2024!

7-9.30PM  
£5 ENTRY

BEACH BALLROOM  
BEACH PROMENADE  
ABERDEEN, AB24 5NR

Please direct any queries to [getinvolved@cornerstone.org.uk](https://getinvolved@cornerstone.org.uk)

Please note the organisers cannot take responsibility for the personal care of any person attending the event.

## DATES

- 3rd April
- 8th May
- 5th June
- 3rd July
- 7th August
- 4th September
- 2nd October
- 6th November **Halloween!**
- 12th December *Christmas Dinner Dance!*

## Don't send me a card

Looking for an alternative to greeting cards? Did you know we have an incredible selection of ecards created by people we support on DontSendMeACard? Access the full collection available to purchase on [dontsendmeacard.com](http://dontsendmeacard.com) – with all proceeds coming straight back to Cornerstone!

# DontSendMeACard



## Care for Cake

Holding a Care for Cake event is a piece of cake!

Organising a Care for Cake fundraiser is an easy way to raise funds for Cornerstone! You get to show off baking skills that even Mary Berry would be proud of and enjoy a cuppa and cake with friends, family or colleagues.

**Our Aberdeen North branch held a Hallowe'en themed Care for Cake event last year and raised an amazing £287 – well done to everyone involved!**



To raise even more funds, you could hold a tombola or raffle during the event. Philip, pictured left, was the lucky winner of the Hallowe'en hamper during the Aberdeen North Hallowe'en Care for Cake, which was filled with spookily delicious treats.

So, why not consider holding an Easter themed Care for Cake event. **Download our fundraising pack by visiting [www.cornerstone.org.uk/care-for-cake](http://www.cornerstone.org.uk/care-for-cake)** for everything you need including Cornerstone bunting, cake flags and name tags, and even recipes from Cornerstone colleagues and people we support.

 **easyfundraising**

You spend, and brands donate to **Cornerstone**

**TESCO**

**JOHN LEWIS PARTNERS**

**ASOS**

**Sainsbury's**

**JUST EAT**

**amazon**

**ASDA**

**7000+ brands**

Scan here  to get signed up



Did you know that Cornerstone Community Care is registered with easyfundraising, which means **you can raise FREE donations for us every time you shop online**. Over 7,000 brands will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself!

If you're looking to buy your easter eggs, bunting or spring themed treats online why not see if you can do so through easyfundraising?

Easyfundraising partners with brands who donate part of what you spend to a cause of your choice. **It won't cost you any extra as the cost is covered by the brand**. These donations really mount up and make a BIG difference to us, so we'd really appreciate it if you could take a moment to sign up and support us.

You can access our easyfundraising page [here](#).

# Shared Lives

## Christmas celebrations

In December the Shared Lives teams organised get-togethers for the carers and people we support in Ayrshire and North Lanarkshire. The events were well attended and provide opportunities to participate in some fun festive activities, have lunch and a blether as well as offer support to one another. In the Scottish Borders, the team arranged a festive group lunch followed by a trip to the local Pantomime to see Rapunzel.



## The New Beginnings Café e-book

We recently created an e-book capturing the experiences and reflections of those involved in setting up and running the New Beginnings Café.

The café and social enterprise launched in Irvine, Ayrshire in 2018 and was a place where people with a learning disability were able to come to learn hospitality, business, team-building and customer service skills in a warm, relaxed and friendly environment.

The publication covers the establishment of the café, responsibilities of running the business, highlights special memorable moments and the impact upon the community and those involved.

Although the café has since closed due to the premises no longer being available, the e-book is a fantastic read which is both heart warming and suitably records the incredible achievements of the New Beginnings Group. [Click here](#) to view the e-book.



## Shared Lives welcomes new Assessor in North Lanarkshire

The Shared Lives team have a new addition to the team! Angela Boyle is the new Family Placement Assessor based in North Lanarkshire and will have responsibility for developing and supporting some of the services in North Lanarkshire and Perthshire. Angela previously worked in Cornerstone's Growing Together project in Glasgow and she is delighted to be back, enjoying her new role within the Shared Lives Team.



## Annual reports available



Our latest Shared Lives report is now available and can be downloaded online. **Find this, as well as previous reports, under the Services tab on the Cornerstone website.**

## Fundraising walk

The Shared Lives community in the Scottish Borders arranged a sponsored walk around Wilton Park in Hawick covering 2.5km and raising a total of £1207.00. Despite the weather, it turned out to be a great day and enjoyed by all. **Well done everyone involved!**



## Aberdeen North and Shire

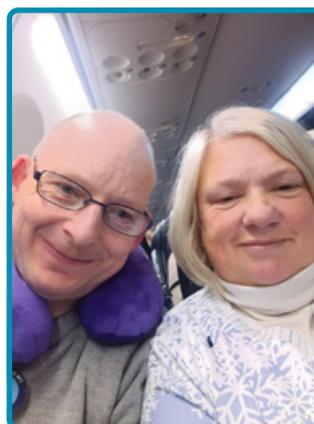
### Youth and Philanthropy Initiative

On Wednesday 28th February Branch Admin Louise McNeil, Lead Practitioner Gemma Mcrae and Cat Allan from the Fundraising Team attended a **Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) event at Mintlaw Academy, North Aberdeenshire.**

Over 200 secondary schools in Scotland participate in the YPI initiative, which is run by Wood, and is a mandatory course that pupils across differing year groups take part in. The young people begin their YPI experience by taking part in an introductory workshop, forming teams, and working together to identify the social issues that are prevalent in their own community. Once they have identified these social issues, students select one issue as their focus, and search for local grassroots charities that exist in their community. The teams then select the charity they believe best addresses their chosen issue, and begin preliminary research around the charity, its mandate, and its activities. **One winning group will receive a £3,000 grant for their chosen charity.** Through YPI, charities receive important funding from the youth of their community, and students – acting as young philanthropists – become powerful agents of social change.

The Cornerstone team had a great afternoon alongside a number of other charities including Scottish Blood Transfusion Service, Shirley's Space, and the Archie Foundation, speaking to 53 pupils, answering their questions on volunteering, donations and explaining what Cornerstone does in their local area. If successful, the Branch would spend the money organising monthly gatherings where the people we support can come together and participate in activities of their choosing.

If your local school would be keen to involve Cornerstone in a YPI initiative **please email Cat Allan at [catriona.allan@cornerstone.org.uk](mailto:catriona.allan@cornerstone.org.uk)**



## A dream come true!

Phillip's dreams came true in December when **he was surprised with a trip to Lapland.**

Travelling with Julie from his support team, he went on a reindeer ride, had a drink at the spectacular ice bar, and met Santa and his elves.

## A tiny visitor

One of our services in North Aberdeen and Shire had a very special pair of visitors recently. **Support Practitioner, Charleigh who is currently on maternity leave popped in with baby Emily.** The people we support absolutely loved meeting her and it was a very special day for everyone.



## Aberdeen South and Shire

### Snow day!

Clare, Julie and Mr Forbes wrapped up and braved the elements for some fun in the snow with Matthew, Amy and Dan from their support team! Not only did they have a fun packed day of sledding they also managed to find time to fit in creating **Bertie the Snowman!**



## Housekeeping

The ladies at Inchbrae have had a huge focus on active support in the past few months, and are getting more and more involved in everyday household tasks.

**One of the goals is to get more involved in making dinners.**

Tamara has been involved in creating a new timetable for kitchen duties – although the ladies all seem to be sharing the responsibility at every given opportunity! They are loving being in the kitchen and not only helping out, but learning lots of new skills along the way too.

This links in well to the ladies wanting to eat healthier meals and snacks, giving them a much better understanding of what goes into the meals they are eating. With menu planning, they are able to identify meals that are good for them, and make more informed, healthier and nutritious choices.

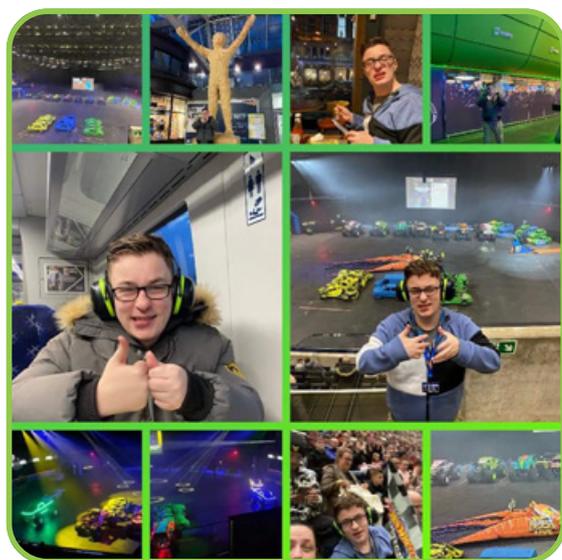
Tamara says **'I like to prepare whatever we eat, we pick what goes in our food and if we don't like it then we don't buy it again. I know what can be put in my breakfast to make it healthy – this morning I had Weetabix with banana, grapes and blueberries.'**

# Ayrshire



## Birthday relaxation

Recently Louise and colleague Emma enjoyed a relaxing spa day at the Gables for Louise's birthday. A fantastic day out was followed by a delicious afternoon tea. **Happy birthday Louise!**



## Castlecraigs Court adventures

The new year saw the start of many adventures for the people we support at Castlecraigs Court.

Robbie, Donna, Lynn and Louise, along with colleagues Chelsea, Beth and Tammy recently went to the Edinburgh Playhouse to see the fantastic show Wicked. A great day was had by all!

Robbie, with support from Tammy, also recently enjoyed a night at the OVO Hydro for the Hot Wheels Monster Truck and Laser Light Show event as well as dinner at Robbie's favourite spot Nando's.



## Lynn's first holiday abroad

Lynn recently enjoyed her first holiday abroad with support practitioner Hannah to Torremolinos in the Costa Del Sol. The weather was fabulous but that didn't stop Lynn enjoying her much loved cups of tea! Lynn enjoyed a visit to the zoo where she pushed herself to get some great photos with the dolphins and a sea lion. She also got the chance to visit the penguin enclosure which was the highlight of her whole holiday.



## Skating fun!

Mandy, from our Loudon Rigg service, had an amazing time **ice skating in East Kilbride** with her support team last month.

**Well done Mandy!**



## Wellbeing Fund

Thanks to North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership who accepted our application to the Wellbeing Fund **which resulted in funding for massage vouchers, barber vouchers as well as a team building event across the branch.**



## Fire drill

Louise, Jonathon, and Robbie, all supported at Castlecraigs Court, had been feeling anxious about the weekly fire testing. **Recognising their apprehension, staff member Chelsea proactively involved them in the testing process to enhance their understanding and alleviate any anxieties.** Following instructions colleagues and the people we support carried out a full test evacuation. This inclusive approach has proven highly successful, with everyone now eager to take part in the weekly tests.

## Colleague forum

Within the Ayrshire branch, a colleague forum convenes on a monthly basis. The aim of this forum is in line with Fair Work practices – to provide all colleagues with an opportunity to voice their views, opinions and share ideas for improvement.

It was hoped the forum would bring colleagues closer together while showcasing the diverse services offered by Cornerstone across Ayrshire. **Re-established in 2022, post-COVID, the forum underwent a review at the close of 2023 to assess its format, frequency, and gather feedback from colleagues regarding its future direction.**

A survey was distributed, yielding some fantastic responses:

- We feel the branch is supportive towards colleagues.
- We are keen to have branch events specifically for staff throughout the year and examples were given of cycling around Millport, cold water dipping, coffee mornings and using planned events for fundraising purposes.
- We are keen for the colleague forum to move from a monthly basis to a quarterly basis.
- We are keen to continue to have the meetings face to face.

Based on the feedback received we will:

- Continue to invest in funding to allow us to have wellbeing events across the branch.
- Invest in two staff specific events this year and benchmark their success.
- Arrange quarterly, face to face meeting dates for 2024.

**Watch this space for future events, ideas and improvements.**

## Dundee, Perth, Fife and West Lothian

### Forrest Walk leg wax

Our Forrest Walk service recently hosted their highly anticipated annual Halloween party. The people we support were joined by family and some of their friends from respite and day care services to celebrate with fun games, a tombola and the scary part...the staff leg wax.

**Support Practitioners Allan and Ewan volunteered their legs to be waxed to raise vital funds for the Forrest Walk service.**

**The day was a massive success and the team raised a whopping £364 smashing their £150 target!** The money will be used in their service to ensure that the people we support live their best lives possible.

**Well done team Forrest Walk!**





## Rosa leading the way

Rosa attended a People First (Scotland) meeting at Perth Concert Hall with her support practitioner Corrine. Rosa sat proudly on their Board of Directors. People First is made up exclusively of people with learning difficulties and Rosa was elected by local members to represent them and their views.

It is People First's mission to make sure that people with learning disabilities have the same human rights as other people, to be able to choose where they live and who they live with, to have fair access to justice under the law and be free of discrimination and hate crime.

Rosa also smashed another goal recently by sourcing, organising and taking part in a first aid course with Albacare Ltd. She was trained in basic first aid and learnt how to instruct another person to give CPR and to also put someone in the recovery position. Rosa learnt how to treat burns and tend to wounds too. She passed with flying colours, achieved her goal and is now fully trained in Basic First Aid. She was presented with a certificate of achievement, a first aid guide and her very own first aid kit.

Rosa said "I have a disability but it doesn't stop me, it doesn't define who I am or what I can do".



## Super Steven!

In December, the Rankine Street team started to support a young gentleman who had previously lived with his mother. This was to be the first time he had been supported by an external organisation. When Steven moved into Rankine Street he had limited life skills, and his support team have worked hard alongside Steven to ensure he is as independent as possible. Within his first six weeks he has achieved the following:

- Healthier sleeping patterns - Steven used to wake up regularly at 4am but after a couple of days at Rankine Street he has been sleeping all night!
- Steven can make his bed, carry his washing to the washing machine, set the table for lunch and evening meal, clean the table, load the dishwasher, sweep the floors, and make his own packed lunch for day centre. He can also now drink from a cup and can use a fork as well as a spoon.
- While Steven was living with his mother he did not want to get his hair cut at a barbers, his mum's partner had to cut his hair. Steven is now managing to go to a local barber.

Steven has learnt a lot of important life skills and he enjoys being part of the household and living with the other gentlemen in Rankine Street. **He has achieved so much with the support of the Rankine Street team, well done all!**

## E-learning achievement

Sean and Daniel, two of the people we support in our Dundee branch, have successfully completed Cornerstone's e-learning courses on fire safety, health safety & risk assessment and basic infection control.

They are now much more knowledgeable of fire safety and are confident in carrying out safe practice within their own home. Sean and Daniel are aware of the importance of switching off their chargers and gadgets within their own home.

Basic Infection control provided awareness of the importance of good hand hygiene to prevent infection from spreading.

Both Sean and Daniel are proud of their achievement, and they were delighted to be presented with certificates of achievement.



# Glasgow and East Dunbartonshire

## Eric's return to Ribby Hall

After facing cancellations due to Covid and a sudden hospitalisation last year, **Eric was finally able to go on his eagerly anticipated holiday to Ribby Hall, Blackpool.** Eric battled hard to recover last year, with support from staff and occupational therapy during his hospital stay and at home. Ribby Hall was one of the prize goals that helped him return to health.

**This being Eric's second visit, he was excited to reunite with some old friends, affectionately known as "The Ribby Hall Ducks".** Eric eagerly awaited their daily visits to his holiday home, where they would tap on his windows in search of treats.

Another highlight for Eric was his visits to "Penny Falls," where he spent hours playing games diligently, winning keyrings and lollipops that he generously gave out to families arriving at the arcade; any extras were saved for family and friends at home. **Eric's total haul of keyrings and lollipops was "around 18".**

Despite the seasonal closure of the pleasure beach, Eric made the most of his time at Ribby Hall, exploring the beachfront and catching glimpses of the iconic Blackpool Tower. Throughout his stay, he indulged in the various amenities the holiday complex had to offer, from dining at the Hive Bar and Spa Hotel to enjoying a buffet feast at Pizza Hut on the beachfront. He enjoyed some bingo and quiz nights too, but his mainstay remained his visits to Penny Falls, accompanied by good food, beer, and the odd wee dram.

Despite the perfect weather for the ducks, **Eric had a fantastic time and has already re-booked to return in September this year.**



## Party time

Ashleigh celebrated her birthday recently and was treated to a surprise party by the Herries Road Team! She explained **"I got a surprise when I walked into the living room, I saw the balloons and everyone sang Happy Birthday! I went out and had dinner and everyone sang Happy Birthday in the restaurant too, it was a good day".**

You can see a video of Ashleigh's birthday surprise by [clicking here.](#)



## Starstruck

Amy, from our Barfillan service, got to tick something off her bucket list; she not only got to see her favourite singer, but she got to meet him too!

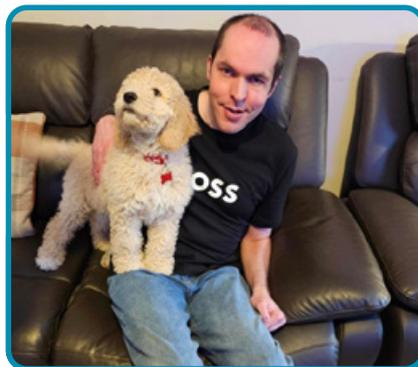
She said it was **"a fantastic end to the best concert ever, meeting Nathan Carter and having my photo taken with him, especially as he is so handsome".**

## A new set of wheels

Christmas definitely came early at Cornerstone's Donohoe Court service in Bishopbriggs, **thanks to the generosity of a very kind benefactor, Billy Paton, who has gifted the service with a wheelchair accessible vehicle!**

A number of year's ago Billy's sister June lived at a nearby Cornerstone service in Lenzie alongside a lady who's mobility had deteriorated. At that point Billy kindly supplied a wheelchair accessible vehicle that they both could have access to, and which really helped to improve their quality of life. Sadly both ladies have since passed away and Billy decided to gift the vehicle to another local Cornerstone service where it would be of immediate benefit to the people we support.

Stephen Cuthew, Service Lead with Cornerstone said: **"We are absolutely blown away by Billy's kindness. The new vehicle will help to improve the lives and independence of the four people we support in our Donohoe Court service. It now means we can look forward to accessing and organising a wider range of outings and activities for them in 2024. They are looking forward to visiting families and friends, being able to attend health appointments more easily, travelling to attractions within the local area such as, swimming pools, ten pin bowling arcade, theatres and concerts and day trips to the seaside. The car will also be used to allow individuals to go on holiday. We really can't thank Billy enough for his kindness, it will make a huge difference to the lives of the people we support!"**



## Puppy power

**Our Richmond Drive service had a wee visit recently from Gypsy.** They just love dogs as you can see from the happy faces. Gypsy had a ball meeting everyone and getting puppy cuddles for the day. As well as this, Nicholas also wanted everyone to see **"How handsome he is today"** - in his own words. Looks like a woof-tastic time was had by all!

## Moray



## Valentine's coffee morning

**Team Parkholme recently held a Valentine's day Fundraiser Coffee Morning.** The team came together to plan the day and raise funds to achieve their goal of upgrading their Snoezelen multi-sensory tool kit for the people they support within the service. For £4.50 entry people were able to enjoy unlimited drinks and cake and were entered into a free raffle prize draw! Not only did everyone have a great day filled with delicious cakes they also raised a whopping £200! **Congratulations Team Parkholme.**



## Robert on the drums

Robert recently took on a new challenge and absolutely loved his drumming session with Carol Scorer! We heard he did an amazing job and enjoyed exploring some rhythms on the hand drums! **Well done Robert!**



## Glitz and glam

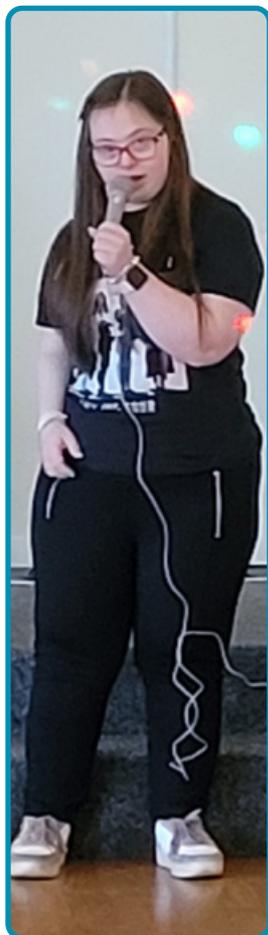
A very kind In Memory donation of £750 was made earlier this year to the Moray branch. **The donation came from Sandy Macgillivray's daughter, Wendy Toner.** Sandy was a Cornerstone employee in Fochabers and Elgin. He was a huge supporter of all Cornerstone's work; he adored his role, and the people supported in Moray.

The donation was made to allow the people we support in Moray to have a Christmas party or a small gift. The managers decided that a New Year Party was a great idea to give everyone something to look forward to after the busy Christmas Party period was over. The team decided on a Glitz and Glam theme so everyone got the chance to dress up again. After finalising the venue of Elgin town hall, booking the DJ, ordering food for the occasion and organising a raffle, invites were sent! On the day, 21 excited party goers arrived along with their support practitioners.

Gillian MacLaren commented, **"As soon as the music started the dancefloor was filled, with numerous requests (from Ken Dodd to AC/DC) being played by the DJ, only stopping for the buffet and the raffle - the main highlight of the day was the impromptu conga which everyone wanted to join in!"**



## North Lanarkshire Community Support and Supported Living



## North Lanarkshire Lunch Club

Cornerstone's North Lanarkshire Lunch Club provides a regular get together for people with learning disabilities, autism and complex care needs across the area. The club has only one goal – **to bring people together to take part in an activity and meet new friends.**

It's been a busy few months for the project which has seen Chair Yoga, Keep Fit, Movie afternoon, and a Christmas party in recent months. In February, the club came together for lunch and a music session at Shining Stars in Coatbridge. Everyone came together to take part in karaoke, dance, and enjoy a good lunch together. We're all looking forward to the next session where we expect a visit from the Therapy Ponies!

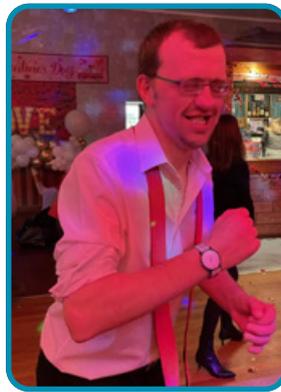
Cornerstone Branch Leader, Andrew McInnes said, **"It's been wonderful hearing about how much fun everyone has at these regular sessions. Having something to look forward to, spending time with friends, and meeting new people can be so valuable when it comes to our wellbeing."**

Cornerstone's North Lanarkshire Lunch Club wouldn't be possible with the generous support of the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund.



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Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund



## Love is in the air

North Lanarkshire Supported Living and Community Support **held their annual Valentine's party at St Margaret's Chapel Hall in Airdrie.** All of our colleagues and the people we support thoroughly enjoyed themselves dancing the night away and it looks like everyone had a fabulous time!

## North Lanarkshire Community Support



## Charter for Involvement event

The North Lanarkshire CS World Cafe recently held their **Charter for Involvement event at St Margaret's Hall in January** which was widely attended by people we support, their guardians and colleagues. **The most important aim of the Charter is for people who receive support to be listened to and respected.** It sets out how people want to be involved in the support that they get, in the organisations that provide their services and within the wider community. Lunch was provided on the day as well as fun games for all to take part in! It looks like everyone had a great day.

## 70 years young!

**Margaret recently celebrated her 70th birthday** and had a fantastic day at her sister's house where her family joined her to celebrate with a lovely meal. She had a wonderful day and was full of smiles as you can see.





## Happy birthday Marie!

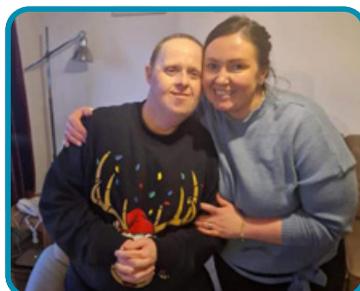
Marie also recently celebrated turning 70 years young at our Airdrie Office, surrounded by our Cornerstone colleagues, people we support, friends and family. We have a lovely selection of pictures from the day and you can see how much everyone enjoyed celebrating Marie's special day.

## Celeb spotting

Martin recently took a fun trip down to Blackpool with support worker Karen. He had a fantastic time and even managed to squeeze in some (wax) celebrity spotting whilst he was there!



## North Lanarkshire Supported Living



## Alan's birthday bash

Alan was centre stage in January when he turned 58! Alan's birthday is one of the best days of the year for him. He loves being showered with attention and celebrating his day with dancing, presents, and cake in the comfort of his own home. Here he is with his Lead Practitioner, Emma, opening some of his cherished presents.

## Fun in the sun

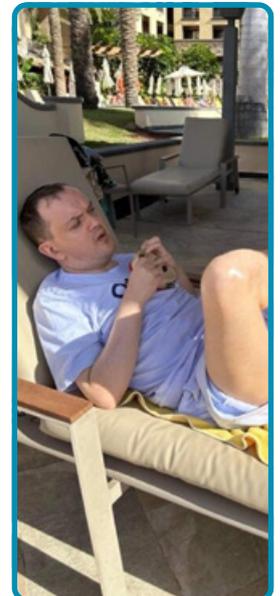
In January, Christopher went on holiday abroad for the very first time ever. Christopher and his two Support Practitioners, Linda and Libby visited Tenerife for some winter sun!

This was a huge achievement for Christopher who had only ever holidayed in the UK. From the minute Christopher sat on the plane with his snacks and in flight meal he was in his element, with a smile from ear to ear.

The weather was gorgeous and Christopher loved spending his days by the pool, playing with his sensory items on the sun lounger, people watching in the cafe's, walking along the beach and going for a paddle in the sea!

Christopher rounded off his holiday with a go on the Touristic Train with a Costa Adeje Tour and visited Monkey Park to feed the cheeky monkeys.

With it being Christopher's big 4-0 birthday this year, the team are hoping to get another holiday booked to celebrate following the success of this trip.





## Currie's new home

Currie was recently supported by his team to move from his family home in Airdrie, where he had resided for 70 years, **to his first ever new home in Coatbridge**, to accommodate a change in his needs. The thought of this transition was challenging for Currie, as he really is a creature of habit. However, as you can see from the smile on his face, once he arrived, he was delighted and is settling nicely into his lovely new home.



## Matthew's sensory room

Matthew loves everything sensory and recently has had a revamp on his new and improved sensory room. It had been a long time coming for Matthew and it's great to see it all come together thanks to the hard work of the team who were delighted to help him achieve one of his goals.



## Church cheque

Uddington's Park United Free Church Ladies Association recently donated £50 to Cornerstone. Each month the group chooses a different charity to support. Branch Leader Robyn Birrell was invited along to be presented with the donation and meet the ladies involved. The group were very friendly and welcoming and have invited Cornerstone staff and the people we support along to join in at their future community run events! Thanks for having us!

Any other Church groups interested in hearing from Cornerstone can contact [getinvolved@cornerstone.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@cornerstone.org.uk) to find out more.

## Scottish Borders



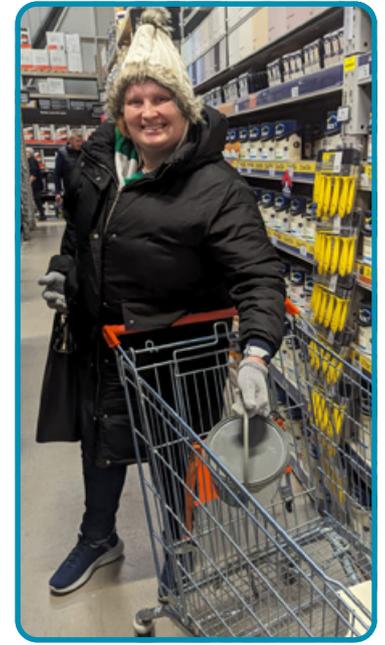
## Heather wins boccia tournament

Heather who is supported by Scottish Borders Community Support Kelso won not one but **TWO Boccia tournaments in 2023!** Well done Heather – we can't wait to see how many more medals you will add to your collection this year.

## Making my bedroom my own

Vikki moved into her new home six months ago and is supported by Cornerstone to live independently. She decided she wanted to decorate her room as at that point it was white, plain and boring to her. With help from her support team she was able to measure her room for carpet to replace the lino flooring, pick out her wallpaper and enjoyed a trip to B & Q to decide on a paint colour. Not only did she get stuck in with the physical decoration, she then went online and sourced Lion King curtains and bedding and finished the room off with a huge Lion King wall sticker. Vikki is very happy with her finished bedroom and now has somewhere she feels she can relax, listen to her music and chill out and watch television!

**Well done Vikki!**



## Putting officially back in Wilton Lodge Park

Around 70 people attended the official opening, performed by ex-Coronet Ali George, of the new Wilton

Lodge Park putting green on Saturday. Drinks and canapés were enjoyed in the sunshine, and

some also enjoyed a game of putting. This new attraction is part of the Pavilion Cafe operation which is run by Bruce and Jude Wilson.

"It has been very busy since opening, especially during periods of dry weather," Jude told us. "Unfortunately, the [recent wet] weather hasn't helped the general footfall in the park."

"But on the whole

everyone is delighted that putting has returned after ten years – it's an activity for all ages and abilities to enjoy.

She added: "It's taken months of preparation, mostly undertaken by Ali and Bruce."

Plans are being made to place a bench in memory of the park's department's Derek Elliot, who passed away earlier this year.

"Derek was a massive help and support to us from

the first day we took over the cafe. He was keen to see the putting reopen and took great pride in maintaining this area of the park," explained Jude.

She also paid tribute to Ali, a former greenranger at Hawick Golf Club.

"He has happily given up his spare time to help. His knowledge and commitment has been outstanding and greatly appreciated."

"We simply couldn't

have done it without him, and that's why we asked him to officially open this exciting new facility."

"Ali also arranged for the use of equipment from the golf club to cut the 18 holes." The putting opening hours (subject to change after the school holidays) are: Monday-Saturday, 10.30am-8pm, last round 7.15pm; Sunday, 10.30am-4pm, last round 3.15pm.

■ YOUR SHOUT, PAGE 17



Ex-Coronet Ali George officially opened the new putting facility on Saturday, watched by a crowd of about 70

## Scott in the news

Scott featured in the local newspaper last year, **having been the ribbon bearer for the opening of a new putting green at Wilton Lodge Park in Hawick.** Alongside this, he continues to lend a hand at the local café kiosk every Friday. **Well done Scott!**



## Christmas party

Our Scottish Borders branch held a Christmas party at the Focus centre in Galashiels. Wullie the DJ was on the decks, a wonderful buffet spread was served, a successful raffle held and Santa's Grotto was a huge hit.

As always at Cornerstone parties, there was a lot of great dancing, friendships made and friends reunited. Santa said Merry Christmas to everyone and gave them a Christmas card and a present too!



# West Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute



From top, left to right: Just a few of the very many happy memories made - Jigsaw at the Irn Bru Carnival and Edinburgh Zoo; Amber eyeing up some blueberry trifle; Therapet Tailie making a visit.

## Jigsaw and Clasp

Back in November, families and Cornerstone employees were informed that Cornerstone's contract with Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership, to provide Jigsaw and Clasp children's services would sadly be coming to an end on 31st March 2024.

Hazel Brown, Chief Executive of Cornerstone said:

"We were very sorry to learn that our contract to provide care and support services to children and families across Argyll and Bute through our Jigsaw and Clasp services, will come to an end on 31st March 2024. Cornerstone and Argyll and Bute HSCP have tried to identify both increased core and additional grant funding to meet increasing costs, but unfortunately this has not been successful. As a not-for-profit and charitable care organisation, we are proud of all that has been achieved with our Jigsaw and Clasp services; the real difference the team has made and the compassionate, person-centred care and support they have been able to provide.

We appreciate the impact this decision will have on the families, children and young people we support and will do all that we can to maintain our support for the remainder of the contract and support any transition needs to a new care provider.

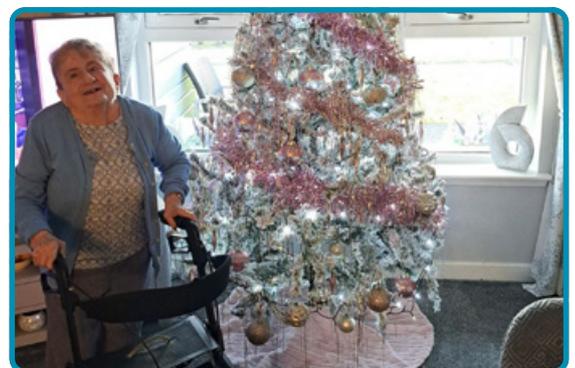
We are also working hard to support colleagues affected by this decision and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them sincerely for all that they have done in delivering exemplary care and support."

Both Jigsaw and Clasp have enjoyed generous support from a number of grant funders over the years including, **BBC Children in Need, The R S Macdonald Charitable Trust, and Shared Care Scotland's Better Breaks Fund**, and we are extremely grateful to each for their commitment and support.



## Paul's out and about

Paul is one of the people we support through our Community Support Service. Paul had not felt able to leave his home since before COVID hit in 2020. But we are delighted to report that with a little bit of help from his social work team and his support staff, Paul has been out and about in his wheelchair again! **His support staff recently took him for a hair cut and he even attended the St Andrew's Day disco where he had the best time!** This was a huge step for Paul and everyone is very proud of him.



## Agnes's first Christmas in her new home

Agnes celebrated her first Christmas in her new beautiful flat. Lovely to see she's settled in nicely and what a very impressive tree. We can't wait to see some garden pics when the spring comes!



**0300 131 3333**

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



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