

Cornerstone News

Winter 2019





Welcome

I'm delighted to be the interim CEO for Cornerstone and believe passionately in what we do and what we're trying to achieve.

I've worked my entire adult life in health and social care, starting as a care assistant for Crossroads, and it's a sector I'm very proud to be part of.

Cornerstone has been going through a huge period of change over the last two years. Sometimes it's hard to keep up and it's easy to forget how far we've come in such a short space of time! As an organisation, I want us to spend the next six months consolidating that change, taking time to reflect on the impact we're making, consider what's working well, and what we could do better.

I will do my very best for Cornerstone over the next few months so that we can continue to provide the very best care to all the people we support across the country.

Hazel Brown,
Interim Chief Executive

Celebrating our people

At Cornerstone, our colleagues are the foundation upon which our work is built, and it's important that we take time to recognise and celebrate their hard work.

The Cornerstone Awards, which celebrate the fantastic achievements of our colleagues, volunteers, and people we support, were held on Halloween at the Marcliffe Hotel in Aberdeen. There were more than 100 people in attendance and guests enjoyed a delicious buffet and Halloween treats. They all had great fun interacting with our frighteningly fun photo booth complete with ghostly props.

Our Chair, Andrew Lockhart, kicked things off with a warm welcome and a summary of what has been an extremely busy but positive year for Cornerstone.

He said, "It's been another busy year for us all, which has been summarised in the Annual Review, and our year two evaluation of Local Cornerstone in particular has been very positive. We've seen more personalised services and improved staff retention, which has resulted in an engaged and motivated workforce.

We continue to lobby the Government to ensure that funding is available to allow us to continue paying the minimum living wage rate and we remain committed to



doing the best we can for our people. At Cornerstone, social care is genuinely valued as a profession and we understand the importance of supporting others to lead full and valued lives in their communities.

There remains a huge interest and support for what we do and it's essential that we continue to share our stories to inspire others to change. Today is an excellent opportunity to reflect >



on our work, and why we do it. Especially as we look towards Cornerstone's 40th anniversary next year. Over the years, our purpose has remained the same and I'm proud that we help those we support to live a valued life - the life they choose.

We are extremely grateful for the support of The Cornerstone Foundation, and the generosity of the public and our staff who raise funds. This year, the Foundation distributed over £750,000 which made a real difference to 900 of the people we support, helping us to transform lives."



Ben is a Cornerstone champion

The Ambassador Award, was also presented at our recent Awards ceremony, recognising local champions who have provided significant support to our charitable work. This year it was awarded to nine year old Ben, who loves spending time with the people we support as well as helping his mum who works as a support worker at our Abbotswell service in Aberdeen.

When we caught up with Ben to ask him how he was feeling after his well-deserved win, he told us, "I couldn't believe my ears when I heard

my name being called out as the winner of the Cornerstone Ambassador Award.

It was amazing! I am really proud to have won this award. I love fundraising for Cornerstone and the guys at the service where my mum works. One of the best days I had fundraising was when we all went to our local Asda to bag pack. The guys from mum's service

went too and we had a great time. I helped pack shopping into bags and also helped anyone who didn't want their bags packed to take their shopping out of the basket on to the belt instead. I told them all about Cornerstone whilst I packed and even some people who didn't have any cash went to get some to put in my bucket. The manager of the service phoned me afterwards and thanked me for helping out, which was awesome!

"I also asked mum to come to my school to tell my classmates all about being a support worker with Cornerstone. My friends asked her about what she liked about her job and she said helping the people she supports and seeing a smile on their faces.

"I still can't believe I have won, after all I was just doing something I like doing; helping people. At the awards they said that they had heard I even wear my Cornerstone T-shirt in bed. It's true. I do!"

Congratulations Ben!



Awards gallery





Excellence at Castlecraigs Court

Castlecraigs Court in Ardrossan, Ayrshire is a housing support service provided by Cornerstone, which operates all year round. The people we support have their own tenancies, with management on call for any emergency situations.

The Care Inspectorate made an unannounced inspection at Castlecraigs Court on 19 September 2019, which resulted in the following grades;

Quality of care and support: 6 (Excellent)
Quality of management and leadership: 6 (Excellent)

These fantastic results were based on various findings. The Care Inspectorate noted that Cornerstone had "excellent working relationships" with external agencies such as local authority commissioning teams, and the health and social care partnerships.

They also found clear evidence of the people we support being involved in the development of their own care packages. They are able to set their own agendas for review meetings, decide on their own action plans, and in some instances write their own care plans.

The plans showed that the people we support are able to enjoy valued connections with family members, as well as having the opportunity to develop independent skills, and plan for their first international holiday.

Castlecraigs Court also successfully raised public awareness of the work they do by running a popular 'Strictly Summer Ball', which raised funds that the people we support are able to benefit from.

"It allowed some people to fulfil lifelong ambitions of being able to dance in front of an audience and live music."

In line with moving towards Local Cornerstone teams, the Care Inspectorate noted that, "positive steps are being taken on a regular basis to ensure that staff are able to voice their opinions on areas in which they feel they could improve their knowledge and practice, thus also adding to the level of support provided to people experiencing support."

Alongside this, the service's own development plan was seen to "demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement across the board."

There are no outstanding recommendations for improvement and you can read the full report on the Care Inspectorate [website](https://www.cornerstone.org.uk).

Our new Glasgow and East Dunbartonshire hub

Cornerstone's Glasgow office has moved! The new Glasgow and East Dunbartonshire branch hub is a flexible working and social space for colleagues across the branch, and includes Cornerstone Central, Cornerstone Foundation, and Training Academy colleagues.

As a 'Centre of Excellence' for training delivery, it ensures that we also have adequate space to deliver a high

standard of training to staff, ensuring they are equipped with the right knowledge and skills to provide a high standard of care. Most importantly, the hub will allow us to bring in the people we support whether it's popping in to say hello or coming along to an activity and meeting other people.

The space is accessible for all and we've received great feedback on how welcoming and comfortable it is.

Pop in and see us some time at Cornerstone, 4th Floor, Doge's, Templeton on the Green, Glasgow, G40 1DA.



Jigsaw on the telly



Jigsaw, our childrens' service based in Rhu supports children and some young adults with additional needs in Helensburgh and the surrounding areas of Argyll & Bute. The team are committed to giving everyone they support the opportunity to meet with peers, make new friends, and have fun all whilst accessing their local and wider communities. There is also a service in Dunoon, known as CLASP which offers support to children and young people during holiday periods.

The services work with children and young people with a range of physical and learning disabilities, and aims to encourage opportunities for young people to feel less isolated and more included in their communities, by helping them to socialise with their peers and work on achieving their goals through meaningful activities.

With support from The Cornerstone Foundation, Jigsaw and CLASP made a successful, three year application to BBC Children in Need for funding to undertake new exciting outdoor activities such as archery, canoeing, climbing, cycling, and horse riding.

This year, Children In Need contacted Jigsaw and CLASP, asking to feature one of

the children who benefit from the services on the BBC programme. This fantastic opportunity allowed us to show how our services have been of immense benefit to Sean and his family, as well as all the other people we support.



A remarkable year

We have recently published our Annual Review for 2018-19, highlighting the meaningful impact Cornerstone teams across the country continue to make to the communities and people we support.

In the last year alone 3,313 people across 19 health and social care partnerships have been supported through Cornerstone residential, community and home-based care provision. We have offered 24 hour support to 343 people and received 81 requests to our Quality of Life programme which benefitted over 900 people.

Andrew Lockhart, Cornerstone Chair comments, "Cornerstone's focus on its charitable purpose of ensuring 'all the people we support live a valued life – the life they choose' has never changed and it's great to see how the organisation has grown again this year to provide vital services to even more people".

"Welcome publications such as the Scottish Government's 'Coming Home' report further strengthened our conviction to continue to lead the sector in designing and building suitable accommodation; assisting more people with disabilities and other support needs, to return home to their local community".

Baxter View in West Dunbartonshire is one such facility and features in the latest annual review. A recent regulatory inspection from the Care Inspectorate saw the service record grades of 6 (excellent) for the quality of care and support, and quality of management and leadership. Margaret Mason, Service Manager at Baxter View comments, "I am delighted with the inspection report. The team has always worked to high standards, taking a flexible and adaptable approach to ensure individual needs are



met so the people we support can enjoy a valued life achieving their goals and aspirations. Baxter View is a fantastic place to work and we have a great team."

Andrew continues, "It would be true to say 2018-19 has been a challenging financial year with an operating deficit larger than anticipated. Some of this was expected with the additional costs of implementing our innovative Local Cornerstone strategy and new business systems. Also, in line with our commitment to demonstrate that we genuinely value social care as a profession, we made a significant investment in pay and honoured our commitment to pay, as

a minimum, the Scottish Living Wage for overnight support. This was implemented despite no increase in funding to cover these additional costs from many of our commissioning authorities".

The 2018-19 Annual Review also gives an interesting update on the Year 2 evaluation of Local Cornerstone and the great results being achieved by the formation of self-organising, Local Care and Support Teams (LCASTs) across the country including the featured Ailsa Drive in Clydebank and Wardend in Elgin. The work of our Self-Directed Support Service is also highlighted, offering insight into the specialist advice and support provided by the team and there's exciting news from our storytellers, The Cornerstone Foundation team, Shared Lives carers and the newly established New Beginnings Café in Ayrshire.

Read the full Cornerstone Annual Review 2018-2019 at www.cornerstone.org.uk/about-us/publications



Mince pie and mingle party

The ladies we support at Huxterstone Drive, Aberdeen have been getting into the Christmas spirit by organising a festive 'Mince Pie and Mingle Party'.

Family and friends were able to come along to have a good ol' Christmas get together. The people we support and our colleagues got crafty and made these gorgeous invitation cards to send out to their loved ones.

Arnha goes doggy daft

Our Upper Arnha support service in Ellon, Aberdeenshire has a new fluffy colleague on board.

Meet Kaos, a newly registered therapist. Kaos has been making a positive impact on the people we support and recently made his first trip to visit two people at Lower Arnha. Ashley, team leader said, "While both gentlemen were excited to see Kaos, one in particular absolutely lit up. It was fantastic to see as he interacted with Kaos and reminisced about his own dogs from when he was growing up. It really did make their day!"

Fun in the sun for CCS

In October, the people supported at Cornerstone Connects in Stonehaven went on another fun filled trip to sunny Majorca.

They had an absolute blast relaxing by the pool and visiting all of their favourite spots on the island. They even got the VIP experience at the popular 'Pirates Adventure Show'.

Local Cornerstone in your community

The Scottish social care sector is a fast paced, ever-changing, and often challenging environment which has resulted in many social services and commissioners looking into new options and creative solutions for how organisations could be run.

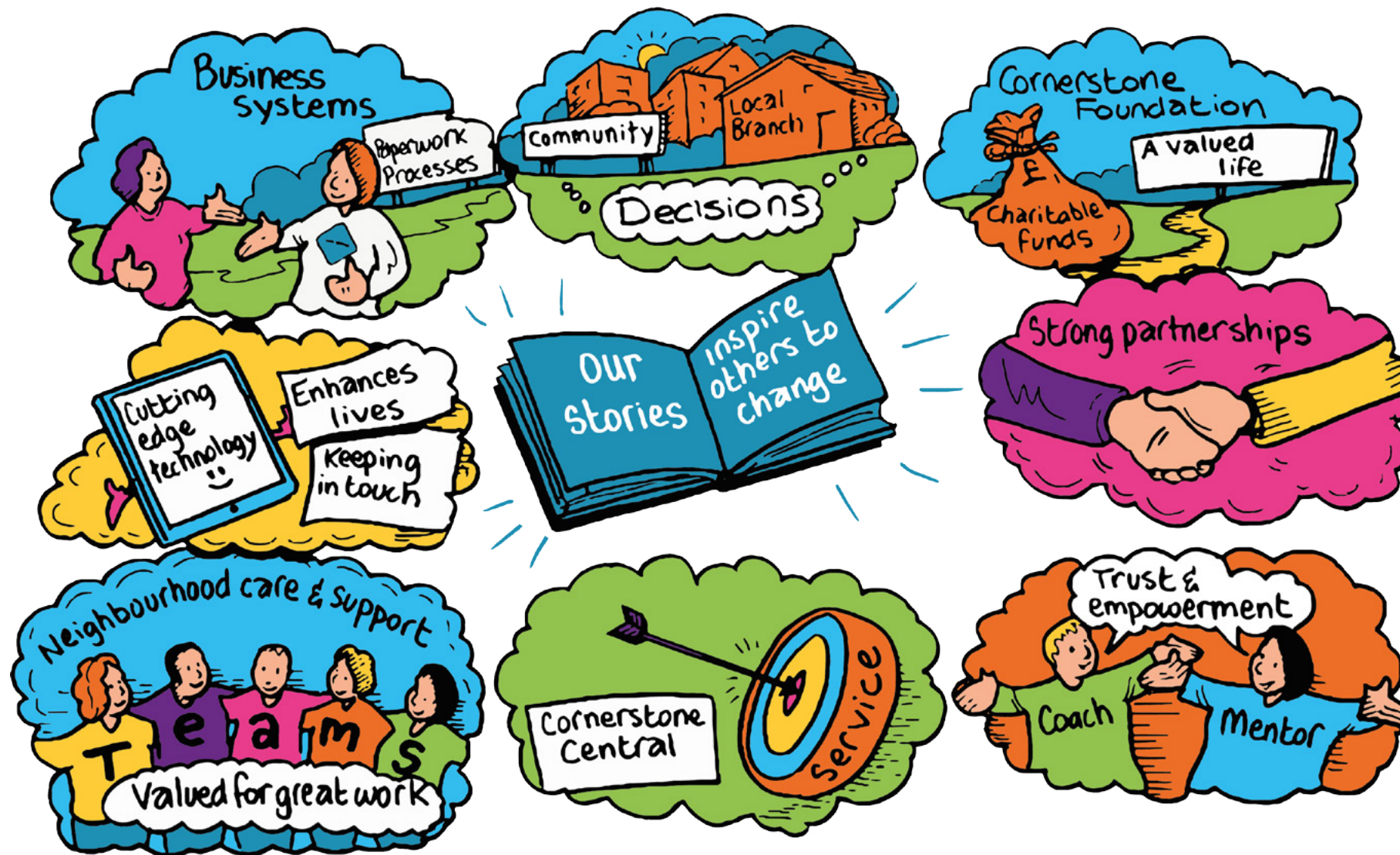
In 2017 Cornerstone was awarded a six figure investment by the Big Lottery Fund to develop a new strategy which has become known as 'Local Cornerstone'. This new plan was developed to overcome the challenges presented by the ever changing social care sector. Its aim is to ensure that Cornerstone can continue to successfully provide a high standard of care well into the future.

Local Cornerstone involved transforming the model of care and support by getting rid of traditional hierarchical structure and creating a network of self-organised teams called Local Care and Support Teams (LCAST). With LCASTs there is a greater emphasis on supporting staff through coaching and upskilling in order to provide an improved, person centred, care and support service for the people we support.

The overall aim of Local Cornerstone is to take the learning from the implementation of this strategy, share it with other care providers and make a significant difference by transforming the way social care is delivered within the UK.

Lynne McHugh, a mentor at Cornerstone in Dundee, gave us some feedback on how her service, and the families we support, found the transition to an LCAST. Lynne has been with Cornerstone for 19 years.

"A meeting was held with the Chief Executive regarding the new plans, and the families were given



reassurance that the new structure was optional, as Local Cornerstone teams becoming self-organised was very much voluntary. I started to have one to one coaching where I discussed my thoughts.

"During this time I was also passing everything on to the team, making sure everyone had the same information as me. It was then decided as a team that we would trial being LCAST. The buzz was amazing and it felt very exciting. I had numerous meetings with the families to reassure them of the process.

"As a team we realised that this would be not only beneficial for us, but also the people we support. I kept focused and repeatedly emphasised 'why' we were doing this. The service we would be providing would not just be good, but exceptional.

"The families have recently provided fantastic feedback, stating that the staff are focused, motivated, and that the communication is excellent. The upskilling of the team continues, and it is so satisfying to see the teams' morale raised and their engagement reinstated.

"From where we started, to where we are now has been a monumental journey. We can demonstrate great benefit to the people we support, and families are reassured knowing the team have a higher knowledge of the care and support provided.

"I was recently asked if I would ever go back to the traditional way of working, I can honestly say I would not. By pulling together all the resources provided, I truly feel we are one team - one Cornerstone. I feel I am in a much happier and better place, and my work life balance has improved greatly.

"The team I work with have always been great but now they are truly amazing."

News from The Cornerstone Foundation

Give as you live

Last minute online Christmas shopping? Please think about using the "Give as you Live" website. It's a free and easy way to shop with over 4,400 registered retailers whilst raising funds for The Cornerstone Foundation at the same time!

Every purchase you make through Give as you Live could see The Cornerstone Foundation receive a commission of up to 10%. Just imagine how much you, your friends and family could raise by signing up today. And even better, when one of your friends joins and raises £5, we'll also receive a bonus £5.

Retailers often boost their commission rates at Christmas so when you bag your next festive bargain, you could be

guaranteeing us a bumper donation from your favourite online retailers including Amazon, Next, ASOS, Argos, Boots, eBay and M&S!

For example, you would raise at least 50p - 1% - for every £50 you spend at John Lewis, while you would raise 2% for every purchase at The Body Shop. Still to stock up for your festive dinner? You'll raise £3 by spending £45 at Tesco,

£2.50 for spending £40 for Asda, and up to £1.50 at Sainsbury's. And, if you're dreaming of some where warmer, we'll receive 3% from your next hotel booking with Expedia.

No matter what you plan to do this Christmas, by shopping with Give as you Live you'll be helping us transform lives.

For more information visit www.giveasyoulive.com

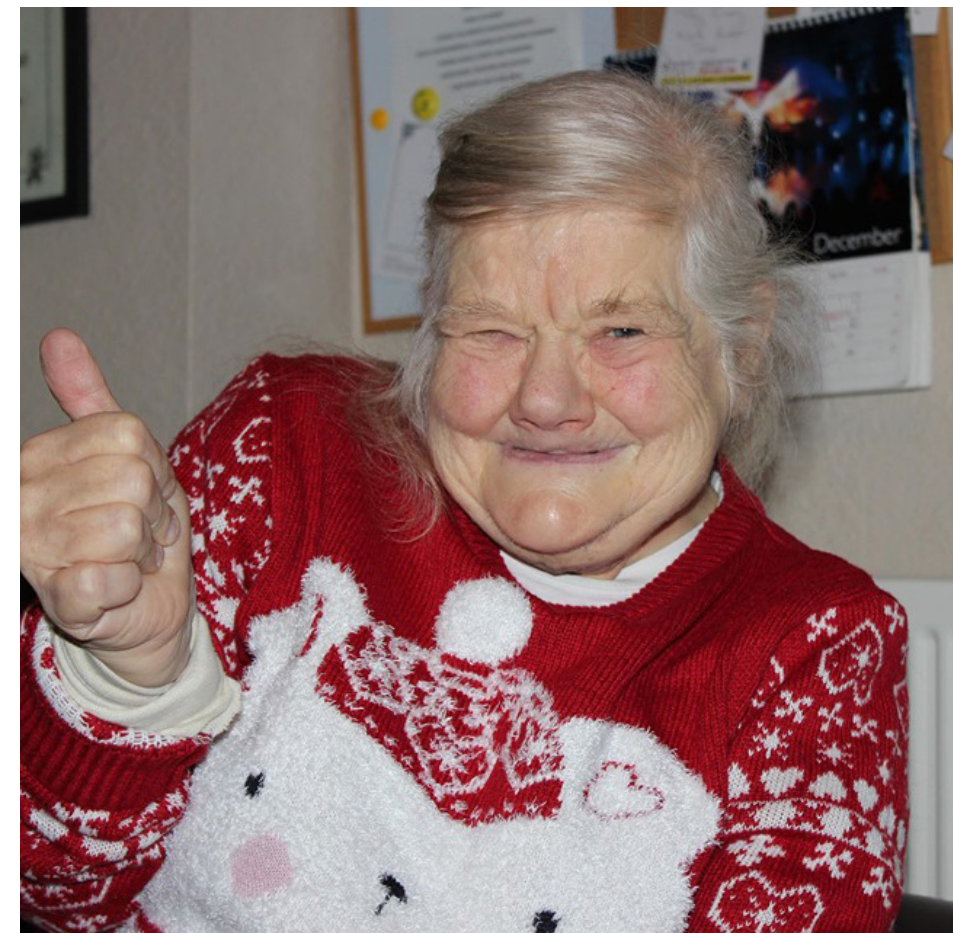


Reaching out for Lizzie

Lizzie is one of the many people we support through our community Outreach service. We have supported Lizzie at Cornerstone since 1989, so it's no surprise that many of our colleagues hold dear memories with her!

Feeling valued and included is extremely important to Lizzie. She's very sociable and loves to catch up with her friends. Previously she would have been out in the community almost every day - either attending her much loved craft group or voluntary job at Wood Recyclability. She's also known as a regular visitor to Pittodrie with her Aberdeen F.C. scarf worn proudly and a big smile on her face. Sadly, over the past two years, Lizzie's health has deteriorated significantly. She has had to give up many of the activities she once enjoyed.

However, thanks to very generous funding secured through The Cornerstone Foundation and the John Gordon Charitable Trust, our Outreach service organised a day trip for the people we support, including Lizzie. This November, they headed off on their travels up to Moray to visit Brodie Country Fair and Fort George. Despite some challenging weather conditions, everybody made the most of it and had a fantastic time catching up with old friends. The happy smile on Lizzie's face when she was waiting for the bus, surrounded by her friends, said it all.



Having something to look forward to and being truly included means the world to Lizzie.

So, this is our thanks to you. Thank you for giving the people we support these important and hugely appreciated

opportunities. They just wouldn't be possible without your generosity. A special thanks too from Lizzie, who just loved making more precious memories with her friends.

Join the team and ride London to Paris for a truly inspirational experience. You'll spend four days in the saddle, cycling 308 miles from capital to capital. Ride through glorious English countryside before crossing the Channel to Calais and then on through quiet French country lanes, and traditional market towns admire the views of the rolling green hills of Northern France and taken in the war memorials and cemeteries of the Somme. A spectacular finish awaits as you reach the home stretch on the Champs Elysées to the Arc de Triomphe, before reaching the piece de resistance, the Eiffel Tower, at the finish line.

15-19 July 2020

Limited spaces!

Deposit £125

Minimum Sponsorship £1610

For more information or to register contact **01224 256 023** or email getinvolved@cornerstone.org.uk

LONDON TO PARIS

CYCLE



Festive boogie!

Ho ho ho! The team in Perth recently held their Christmas disco, and it was certainly one to remember! As well as celebrating Christmas, this was their 10th annual disco.

Max, one of the people we support, came up with the original idea to organise these discos, and so in his honour we held an awards ceremony which included the Max award. The other awards included Ultimate Dancers, Best Newcomers, and Best Dressed. A very merry time was had by all!



Shared learning

We were delighted to welcome visitors from Bellevie Care to our Glasgow office recently. Trudie and Violaine were keen to find out about our Local Cornerstone model, the use of technology, and our current recruitment approaches.

We also took time to discuss some of the challenges currently being faced by the social care sector and some of the creative and innovative solutions being employed. A visit from a group of people we support at Mill Street, Glasgow was a definite highlight, providing our visitors with the opportunity to hear first hand about Cornerstone care and also the chance to talk to Local Cornerstone team members.



Help us celebrate our 40th!

In 2020 we will be celebrating Cornerstone's 40th anniversary! This impressive milestone is a chance for us to reflect on all the accomplishments and positive impact that Cornerstone has had on the people we have supported over the years.

In the run up to the big celebration, we would love to hear of any special memories you have; how Cornerstone has affected your life, or the life of someone you know. Please contact us at marketing.comms@cornerstone.org.uk

Keep an eye on social media for more updates.





Stop! You're under a vest!

Cornerstone's Children, Young People, and Young Adult Service, which is based in Moray, offers social inclusion to children and teenagers of school age through after-school clubs that run every evening, Tuesday to Friday.

Each age group can attend once a week, allowing the children and teenagers to socially interact with their peers, developing their independence and confidence. They also provide a holiday club during the Easter, summer and October holidays, which offer an exciting range of outdoor activities, in the challenging environment of Moray's coastline, woodland and inland waterways. These activities include abseiling, canoeing, rock climbing, surfing and coasteering, bush craft, and archery.

Springfield Properties, based in Elgin, very kindly donated hi-vis vests to the service. The safety of our colleagues, children, and young people is a priority and these vests will help to ensure they are visible when they are out and about.

Cornerstone would like to thank Springfield Properties for their kind donation.



Training Academy

The Cornerstone Training Academy supports the learning and development needs of all Cornerstone colleagues and is responsible for scheduling and arranging courses to meet mandatory requirements, enabling our colleagues to be qualified to assist the people they support.

The Training Academy arrange service specific training, a number of which can be covered remotely via e-learning, including Administration of Medication & Food Hygiene.

Recently the Training Academy have been carrying out a new course to upskill mentors working within Cornerstone. This has proved to be a challenging but useful course which will aid mentors in identifying ways of improving support for colleagues within the services.

In collaboration with the Prince's Trust, the Training Academy also recently completed a Get Into Social Care program in West Dunbartonshire. This course resulted in six young people successfully securing positions with Cornerstone.

The Training Academy also offers colleagues the chance to complete SVQ qualifications. All of the qualifications we deliver are relevant to the roles of our colleagues and enable them to improve their work practice and carry out their role with greater confidence. Cornerstone's Approved Centre is accredited to deliver:

- SVQ in Social Services and Healthcare SCQF Level 6,7,9.
- SVQ in Social Services (Children and Young People) SCQF Level 6,7,9.
- SVQ in Management SCQF Level 7,9.
- Numeracy, Information & Communication Technology, and Working with Others.
- SVQ in Business and Administration at SCQF Level 5 and 6.



When we recruit people at Cornerstone, we like to involve the people we support as much as we can during the recruitment process, to try and ensure a good match. We decided to look for ways to further improve the process which is where our new project with Talking Mats comes in.

Talking Mats is an interactive communication method that has been based on extensive research, which uses three sets of picture communication symbols – topics, options, and a visual scale. This can be used in different formats such as a physical, textured mat, or in digital app form through a tablet, or computer, making communication for

people with disability much easier.

Since winning funding for our 'intrapreneurial' project in April we have been working behind the scenes in partnership with Talking Mats to create a set of symbols which focus specifically on recruitment, care, and our colleagues. Using this pioneering approach we hope to give the people we support even more of a say in who we employ by enabling them to express what's important to them, and for us to be able to accommodate this. This information can then be used to inform job adverts; during shortlisting; creating interview questions or informing recruitment decisions. It's flexible to use in a variety of recruitment situations,

dependent on individual circumstances.

Talking Mats is already used in many social work, residential and education settings by people such as clinical practitioners, carers and support workers. The mats allow children and adults to express their preferences, making them an ideal fit for Cornerstone.

Over the next three months we are testing and piloting the tool in a variety of services and locations across Cornerstone to evaluate their potential to make a difference.

If you would like more information about this recruitment tool please contact kerri.bellingham@cornerstone.org.uk or debbie.masson@cornerstone.org.uk



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