

Autumn/Winter 2017

www.peoplefirstscotland.org

People First (Scotland) Fife Newsletter

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New Members welcome at People First Groups

All members of People First (Scotland) are adults with learning disabilities. All members are treated with dignity and respect.

Members meet in groups in their own local area. Ownership of all groups is with members, who decide on topics to discuss and what guest speakers they would like to invite to meetings.

There is also the chance to meet new people and form new friendships

Groups operate a red and green card system. This means all members speak through the Chairperson, therefore, everyone has the chance to have their say and express their own opinions.

Each local group votes for their own Office Bearers. Also, every People First member has the right to take part in electing local Directors to represent them on the national Board of Directors.

People First (Scotland) members' campaign to establish and protect the same freedom, choice, dignity and control held by other citizens across all areas of life.

Details of local groups are on pages 11/12 or get in touch with Kate or Andrea (contact details on back page)

For more information, the People First (Scotland) website is:

www.peoplefirstscotland.org



Please Stop!
I need help

I want to
speak!



People First (Fife) Women's Groups

Lochgelly Women's Group

The **Lochgelly Women's Group** is long established and has welcomed two new members recently.

Thanks to the support of Fiona MacDonald, nutritionist with NHS Fife, a short 'Healthy Eating, Healthy Living' pack has been compiled. Members have enjoyed using this pack and have found it very informative and useful.

Members have also had visits from: Community Fire Officer; Community Police Officer; Alison from Oral Health Promotions and the Community Wardens.

This group meets once a month on a Thursday afternoon in Lochgelly Centre.



The **Kirkcaldy Women's Group** recently invited the People First Glasgow Women's Group to visit.

The Glasgow Women's Group have just finished a big piece of work looking at women's body image and self-confidence, as part of 'The Life I Want' project. The group made a DVD to explain how they felt about beauty and how they feel other people look at them. They shared the DVD with the Kirkcaldy Women's Group and talked about the work they have been doing.



The Kirkcaldy Women's Group meets once a month on a Monday afternoon in St Bryce Kirk.

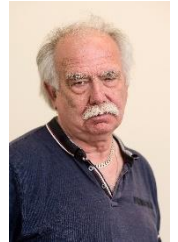
People First (Fife) Men's Group

The Men's Group meets at St Bryce Kirk in Kirkcaldy once a month on a Friday afternoon and has a well-established membership.



James McNab, Chairperson, said:

“The group is very popular and members talk about issues that are important to men. It is supported by Michael Low, Volunteer Advisor. Because it is all men who attend, it is easy to speak about things



We have had visits to the group this year from the Safer Communities Officers, Police Officers and Learning Disability Services.

At the meeting in September, we visited Kirkcaldy Fire Station. Colin Sanderson, Community Fire Officer, gave a very interesting talk about the work of the Fire Service and demonstrated the equipment used by Fire Officers.



Colin also gave useful pieces of safety advice about fire prevention and introduced members to the Fire Station Manager.



It was a very interesting experience for members and we were able to ask lots of questions that we had prepared before the visit.”

Scottish Health Council Visit to the Fife Wide Group

The Scottish Health Council wanted to know People First members' views about the health service.



This was on the Agenda for all the local groups, which meant all Fife members were able to contribute.

Judith Knox from the Scottish Health Council visited the Fife Wide Group in August to hear what members' had to say about their experiences of Health Services.



Some positive and negative experiences of visiting doctors, dentists, opticians and hospital were reported.



Many members thought it was a good idea to remind patients of appointments by text. Judith agreed that this is a useful service and it would be helpful if all other surgeries signed up to it.



It was pointed out to Judith that some members can get their toe nails cut through the NHS but other members have had to go private and pay to get this done.



Many members find it difficult to get an appointment with their doctor. Even getting a phone call answered can take hours! Judith acknowledged that getting an appointment with a specific GP can be very difficult.



It was pointed out that sometimes medical staff speak to family members or carers and not to the patients themselves, which is very insulting.



Judith said this has been raised before. The fact that members are raising it will add weight to the argument that, across the board, medical staff should receive communication training.

Members sometimes wait at the doctors for a long time and no one comes to tell them when they will be seen. Judith said once again, this is down to communication and patients should be kept informed of delays in appointments.



Judith explained that receptionists may ask a patient what is wrong, because for some things, a nurse practitioner may be able to see the patient sooner than the doctor.



Judith said that all the points raised in the meeting and all the comments made by members in their groups, will be passed on to the Health Board to drive change forward.



Disability Discrimination Presentations

At the end of August 2017, Tracy Scott and Mandy Law delivered three sessions of Disability Discrimination Presentations, to 340 Fourth Year students at Balwearie High School, Kirkcaldy.



Tracy outlined the meaning of 'Disability Discrimination': 'Disability Discrimination is treating someone worse than other people because of their disability.'



Mandy told students that The Equality Act states: 'Equality means everyone having the same chances to do what they can. Some people may need extra help to get the same chances.'



Mandy also pointed out to the students that not all disabilities are visible. Anybody could walk past Mandy or Tracy in the street and not know they both have a learning disability.



Then it was 'Party Time'. Tracy asked for ten student volunteers. Each volunteer had a party hat with a label, placed on their head. There was a mixture of positive, negative and in-between labels, for example, 'popular', 'never listens' or 'rebellious'. Students were told not to look at their own label or to tell other students what their label said.



The volunteers then had to arrange a party, deciding who would be invited and who would not be invited, based only on their party hat label. Those not invited were told to stand to the side.

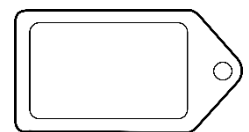


The students who were invited to the party were then asked how they felt telling the others to stand to the side. Also, they were asked why they had decided not to invite them and how being left out might feel.

INCLUSION OF THOSE MOST LEFT OUT

Those not invited were asked about their feelings and how it felt not knowing why they were left out.

Although this was a fun activity, there was a clear message about judging people by the label they are given, rather than getting to know the person.



Tracy and Mandy then went on to tell the students their own personal stories about being discriminated against and treated differently because of their disabilities.



A short DVD then showed the impact of disability discrimination and hate crime on the life of a College student.



These Fourth Year students had also taken part in the People First (Fife) Disability Hate Crime Presentation when they were in First Year.



DRILL Report



drill
Disability Research on
Independent Living & Learning

Earlier this year, People First (Scotland), partnered with Animate Consulting, carried out research into the decisions people with learning disabilities make in their lives. The Big Lottery funded this research.



It was hoped to find out what can support people with learning disabilities to make their own decisions.



People First members acted as peer researchers and spoke to more than 120 people with learning disabilities.



Most people reported that making their own decisions increased their self-confidence and they felt more in control of their lives.



Others said it can be challenging to make your own decisions and advice from others is appreciated.



Some people reported they do not always get the chance to make their own decisions.



Some people are supported to make decisions by family, friends, support workers or social workers. This works best when the person is listened to and they trust the person who is supporting them.



There are some challenges.

The law in Scotland says that a learning disability is a mental disorder. This means that a judge can decide if a person with a learning disability will lose the right to make their own decisions.



Some people with learning disabilities have guardians who can make decisions for them. The law states guardianship should only happen if all other support has been tried and is not working, but this is not the case.



Often the right checks are not being made to see if the person with learning disabilities could be **supported to make their own decisions**.



In Scotland, guardians do not receive training around supporting decision-making. Therefore, they lack these skills.



In Sweden decision-making supporters are skilled and money is spent to assist this.

Supported decision-making could work, but a change in attitude is needed. People in power must think differently about the rights of people with learning disabilities. Money and time require to be spent to make supported decision-making a reality for adults with learning disabilities in Scotland.



The full report, and the Easy Read report, are on the People First (Scotland) website, in the News section.

www.peoplefirstscotland.org





Fife Groups

Group Advocacy (Collective self-advocacy) Groups in Fife.

All Groups meet once a month. Please contact us for dates.

kate.milliken@peoplefirstscotland.org



07834328821

andrea.ladyka@peoplefirstscotland.org



07841362170

Find out more about People First (Scotland) on our website:

www.peoplefirstscotland.org

Crossgates

Thursdays 10.30am – 12pm

Crossgates Community Centre

Dunfermline

Wednesdays 1.30pm – 3pm

Dell Farquharson Centre, 7 Nethertown Broad Street, Dunfermline

Mayfield, Lynebank

Wednesdays 6.30pm – 7.30pm

Mayfield Unit, Lynebank Hospital

Kirkcaldy

Fridays 1pm – 2.30pm

St Bryce Kirk, St Brycedale Avenue, Kirkcaldy

Glenrothes

Fridays 1.30pm – 2.45pm

Fife Voluntary Action, Craig Mitchell House, Flemington Road, Glenrothes

Leven

Thursdays 1.30pm – 2.45pm

The Centre, Commercial Road, Leven

Cupar, Dalgairn

Mondays 1.30pm - 2.45pm

Dalgairn Building, Bank Street, Cupar

Elmwood, Cupar

Thursdays 1pm – 2.30pm

Cupar Fire Station, Millgate, Cupar

St Andrews

Tuesdays 6pm – 7.30pm

Cosmos Centre, Abbey Walk, St Andrews

Women's Group (Kirkcaldy)

Mondays 1pm – 2.30pm

St Bryce Kirk, St Brycedale Avenue, Kirkcaldy

Lochgelly Women's Group

Thursdays 1pm – 2.30pm

Lochgelly Centre, Bank Street, Lochgelly

Men's Group

Fridays 1.15pm – 2.45pm

St Bryce Kirk, St Brycedale Avenue, Kirkcaldy

Refreshing Fife's Advocacy Strategy for 2017 – 2021

The last Advocacy Strategy, from 2014 – 2017, set out how Fife Health & Social Care Partnership planned to develop and improve access to independent advocacy across Fife.



It is now time to 'refresh' this strategy for 2017 – 2021.

Fife Advocacy Forum supports the development of independent advocacy services across Fife. The range of advocacy services available helps to meet the needs of different people at different times in their lives.

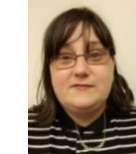
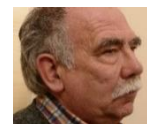


Fife Health & Social Care Partnership, along with Fife Advocacy Forum, held two events to discuss 'refreshing' the current strategy and to identify gaps in advocacy provision.



As well as an overview of the Advocacy Strategy, round table discussions took place, where each advocacy provider had the opportunity to explain about the advocacy their organisation delivers. This gave participants the chance to hear about the work each organisation does and who they work with.

James McNab, Brian Rosie, Vicki Chalmers, Mandy Law and Michael Stirling were the People First (Fife) representatives in the round table discussions.



In addition to this, drop in sessions across the whole of Fife took place. These were to give people in Fife the opportunity to say what they thought about advocacy provision and identify any gaps.

When all the feedback is available, an Advocacy Strategy for 2017 – 2021 will be developed.



Fife Adult Support and Protection

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking means that people are sold for sex or forced to work or do things that are against the law. To report information call Police Scotland on 101 or, Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



Financial Harm

Citizens Advice say that companies that lend money are letting people borrow too much. They should check whether you can afford to pay the money back. If you need money advice call the Citizen's Advice Consumer Helpline on 03454 04 05 06. The Adult Support and Protection Team easy read booklets, 'Keeping Your Money Safe' and 'Financial Harm – Scams', give advice on financial harm, scams, bogus callers and power of attorney.



Scams

Be careful of 'something for you' cards which look like the slip you get through your door when you have missed a delivery. If it does not have a Royal Mail logo on it, it is a scam. Do not call the number on it. To report a scam call Police Scotland on 101 or, Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040.



Easy Read

People First (Fife) groups are helping the Adult Support and Protection Committee with easy read information about sexual abuse, and about safe and healthy relationships.

All Adult Support and Protection information is available in Easy Read: www.fifedirect.org.uk/adultprotectioneasyread



Contact Shona



03451 55 55 55 extension 442134

Email: shona.mcewan@fife.gov.uk

Contacts:

Email: People First (Fife)
Development Workers



kate.milliken@peoplefirstscotland.org



andrea.ladyka@peoplefirstscotland.org



Office: 01383 624884



07834328821



07841362170



People First Fife,
Unit 17A Dunfermline Business Centre
Izatt Avenue, Dunfermline KY11 3BZ



www.peoplefirstscotland.org

Newsletter Group Members



Michael
Stirling



Brenda
Kirby



Brian
Rosie



Vicki
Chalmers



David
Scott



Christine
McGilton