

Issue 37, December 2020



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With Christmas fast approaching, and the weather well and truly getting frosty, join us in looking over our most recent activities and news—from our first groups after lockdown, to Halloween highlights and new staff!

New Staff!



Welcome Katie McFarlane.
Katie joined us in September as our new Befriending Coordinator.

“I have a very varied background – from working in museums to aquariums, with giant tortoises and sharks – but have spent the last six years working specifically with children and young people in an educational setting. I managed the Education & Conservation department at Blair Drummond Safari Park, which included being the Volunteer Coordinator. Having been a volunteer myself for various charities throughout my life, I look forward to taking on the role of Befriending Coordinator with Fife Young Carers. I know how much difference volunteers can make to both individuals and an organisation so look forward to developing the role further”.

Katie will be supporting Young Carers to access social activities in their communities through volunteer befrienders, enabling them to access these and other opportunities.

We are also pleased to introduce Charlie Bowie to our team!

Charlie comes on board with us as a Support Worker for NE Fife.

“Hi, I am Charlie the new worker for North East Fife. I come from a very mixed background and have taken on a wide range of roles both voluntary in the charity sector and in outdoor sports. In the past I have worked at a water-ski and wakeboard centre where I became a fully qualified coach. I have been volunteering for many different charities for the last 6/7 years. In this time I have: volunteered with the Fife Young Carers Focus Group/ Voices of Change; worked on projects with Youth 1st; and even taken a trip to Uganda for 3 months to teach young people. For the last year I have been a sessional worker in West Fife with FYC and am very excited to get started in my new role.”

Charlie will be responsible for supporting Young Carers in the North East Fife area, helping to alleviate the impact of their caring roles.



Welcome to the team ladies!

Befriending Project



Befriending update – December 2020

Throughout the UK Befrienders support thousands of people each year who are feeling isolated, alone, or simply in need of a friendly chat. Sometimes we *all* need a change of scenery and a nice walk or conversation. If there is one thing that 2020 has given perspective to it is how important social interaction is for us all. We are therefore very excited to get our Befriending Project up and running, with Katie Macfarlane taking up the post as Befriending Coordinator.

“Regular social interaction can help to build confidence, self-esteem and structure for someone – there are so many other amazing benefits of both being a befriender and having one.” Katie, Befriending Coordinator.

In November we focussed on recruiting volunteer befrienders to support young carers to take part in activities in their community. These befrienders will enhance what we offer by helping young carers access social opportunities in their area, build trusting relationships and have fun along the way.

We are dedicated to raising awareness of young carers support needs, as well as providing an opportunity for them to have a break from their caring role and build their confidence. This could be a walk along the beach, a visit to a local site or café, bowling, the cinema, or all sorts of fun activities when it’s safe to do so again.

We are advertising our opportunities on social media with some photos and quotes from our young people. It’s so important to hear directly from the Young Carers – they know what they need and want. As we work with such a wide age range (8 to 25) there are opportunities for volunteers to gain a variety of experience as well. So far, we have enjoyed hearing from lots of wonderful people who are excited to start volunteering with us and have our first online training session in December with a group of our future befrienders.

It has been fantastic to see the range of ages and people from different walks of life that have come forward to get involved. Now more than ever, individuals are looking for worthwhile things to do with their time; this is the perfect opportunity to give back to your local community, while learning new skills along the way, making new friends is, of course, a big part of it too.



Want to volunteer with young people in your area?

**FIFE YOUNG CARERS
RECRUITING 1:1 VOLUNTEER BEFRIENDERS**
SUPPORTING YOUNG CARERS (8-24) TO ACCESS
WEEKLY ACTIVITIES IN THEIR COMMUNITY

.....
FULL TRAINING PROVIDED
Contact: admin@fifeyoungcarers.co.uk
01592786717

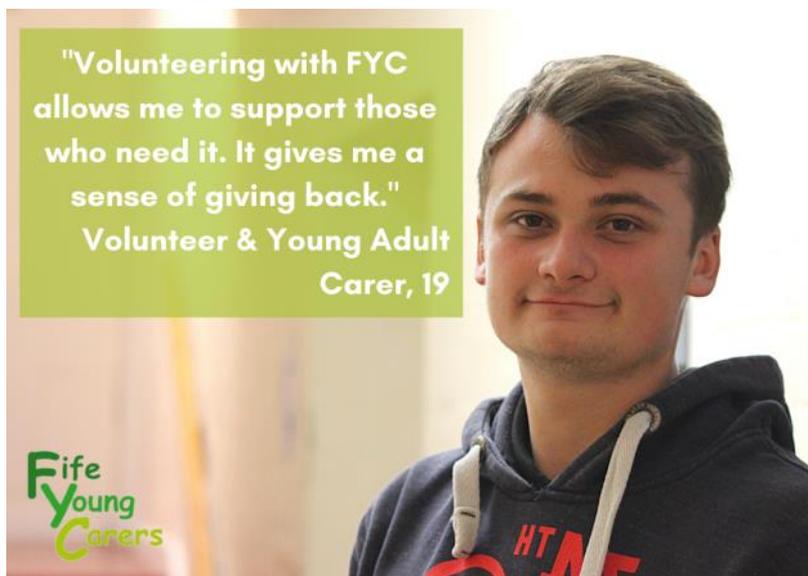


Scottish Charity (SCIO): SCD47519



Volunteering with Fife Young Carers can be an incredibly rewarding experience for you as an individual too. Here is Logan, a Young Carer who has also volunteered for us for a number of years giving us his thoughts:

We provide all training and support throughout your time with us.



"Befriending is such an important role with befrienders working alongside individual Young Carers to improve their confidence and ensure they have a life and identity out-with their caring role" Kirstie, Manager of Fife Young Carers.



"Once it is safe to do so, we will begin matching out new befrienders up to a Young Carer in their area. After a few fun meetings and activities with myself and other staff members, the befriender will then organise a weekly activity or outing with their young person." Katie continues. "We ideally want people to commit to weekly or fortnightly visits, with a minimum commitment of three months."

Do you have the personality, skills, time or experience to support a young person in your community? Or do you know someone you can pass this information on to?

If you know anyone who is interested contact katie@fifeyoungcarers.co.uk or call 01592 786717. All training and support will be provided by FYC. Offered roles are subject to successful PVG being received (cost covered by FYC) and all volunteers must be 18 +.

Activities

Let us re-introduce ourselves....

VOICES OF CHANGE



That's right, your good old Young Carers Focus Group have gone through a bit of a revamp and development recently.

Lockdown gave us the perfect opportunity to really look in depth at ourselves as a participation and engagement group and we realised, the name 'Focus Group', could be quite misleading as we are not actually a Focus Group in the traditional sense – we are so much more!

Our first step in the development process was to decide what we really are and what we want to achieve in the future. Our meetings during lockdown have focussed on this and we created our new Purpose: **'The Voices of Change Group is a participation and engagement group dedicated to raising the profile of Young and Young Adult Carers in the Fife area. We are campaigners and advocates for Young Carers rights and needs. We represent Young Carers at all levels within service and work with professionals, the public and Fife Young Carers staff and Board.'**



Don't worry though, even with our new purpose and new name, we are continuing with all our great work and projects you know us for: raising awareness for Young Carers across sectors; providing training; engaging other Young Carers; and consulting on issues that affect us. Ultimately, we aim to be the Voice of Change for Young Carers, by Young Carers.



So, if you have an idea/project or want to work with us on campaigning and raising the profile of Young Carers, please get in touch:

voicesofchange@fifyoungcarers.co.uk or follow our Twitter: [@VoiceofChangeYC](https://twitter.com/VoiceofChangeYC)
—The Voices of Change x

Celebration Events

Finally, after many months in lockdown without our beloved support groups, we got the go ahead to host our first ones during the October Holidays.

To make these extra special, we applied for funding to host them as Celebration Events, complete with giant games, lots of activities and a picnic.

As you can see, the young people absolutely loved them, as did the staff. They all mentioned how good it was to be back and see each other again, enjoying respite and good company after such a long time!



Happy Halloween

One of our favourite times of the year—Halloween.

We were so thankful we were able to celebrate this fantastic holiday again with everyone at groups. We had pumpkin carving, pin the sticker on the witch and loads of Halloween themed sweets and goodie bags!

Another brilliant night.



That time of year again—Christmas!

We usually do big Christmas events with lots of Young Carers, but understandably, this cannot be done this year. Not to worry though, we have still managed to celebrate the festive season in style with individual Christmas themed groups.

Fantastically festive time as always.



Health Information

Staying Well in Winter

Cold weather can make some health problems worse and even lead to serious complications, especially if you are 65 or older, or if you have a long-term health condition. If you look after someone who may be at risk, or you are at risk yourself, please have a look at our Staying Well in Winter guide for advice.

Who is most at risk from cold weather?

Some people are more vulnerable to the effects of cold weather. This includes:

- people aged 65 and older
- babies and children under the age of 5
- people on a low income (so cannot afford heating)
- people who have a long-term health condition
- people with a disability
- pregnant women
- people who have a mental health condition

Get Advice if your feeling unwell:



NHS inform is Scotland's health information service. It offers quality assured health and care information via a website and phone service. Visit here for advice: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/>



The NHS 24 111 service provides urgent care advice day or night and health and dental support when your GP practice or dentist is closed. You should only phone 999 or go to A&E for emergencies. Remember you can still call your GP practice for advice as well.

Flu Vaccine

Flu will often get better on its own, but it can make some people seriously ill. Some people are advised to get the flu vaccine.

The flu vaccine is offered every year on the NHS to help protect people at risk of flu and its complications. The best time to have the flu vaccine is in the autumn before flu starts spreading. But you can get the vaccine later.

Its one of the most proactive ways you and your cared-for person can prepare for winter and we encourage you to do so. Young and Adult Carers are now eligible for the vaccine and you find out how to book this here: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/immunisation/vaccines/flu-vaccine>

COVID-19 Update:

Fife, as of the 8th December, is still in Level 3 of the Tier system. Full in depth details of these measures can be found here: <https://www.nhsfife.org/media/34129/level-3-measures.pdf>

What do I do if I have coronavirus symptoms?

You should stay at home and self isolate for 14 days and book a Test if you have either:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous dry cough
- Loss of Taste or Smell

Call 111 if your symptoms:

- are severe or you have shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- worsen within the 7 days you're at home
- haven't improved after 7 days

Keep Warm this Winter

Another way of staying well during our chilly Scottish Winter is keeping yourself and your home nice and warm:

- if you're not very mobile, are 65 or over, or have a health condition, such as heart or lung disease, heat your home to at least 18C
- keep your bedroom at 18C all night if you can – and keep bedroom window closed
- if you're under 65, healthy and active, you can safely have your home cooler than 18C, as long as you're comfortable
- use a hot water bottle or electric blanket to keep warm in bed – but do not use both at the same time
- have at least 1 hot meal a day – eating regularly helps keep you warm
- have hot drinks regularly
- draw curtains at dusk and keep doors closed to block out draughts
- get your heating system checked regularly by a qualified professional



If you are struggling with Heating Costs, help is available:

You may be able to claim financial and practical help with heating your home. Grants available include the Winter Fuel Payment and the Cold Weather Payment: www.gov.scot/policies/social-security/help-with-heating-costs/

For more information on how to reduce your bills and make your home more energy efficient, go to the governments' Simple Energy Advice website, or call the Simple Energy Advice helpline on 0800 444 202. They can provide you with advice and guidance, including grant information to help make your home more energy efficient.

You can also find out about heating and housing benefits on GOV.UK: www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/heating

It's worth claiming all the benefits you're entitled to as soon as winter begins.

We hope you manage to stay well this Christmas. If you need some help we have put together a few useful numbers.

Who to phone if I need help with....

An emergency – 999

Non emergency medical needs – 111

Suicidal thoughts – Samaritans 116 123/Breathing Space 0800 838 587/GP/999

No food in the house – Scottish Welfare 0300 555 0265/Citizens Advice 0345 1400 095

Nowhere to sleep tonight – Fife Council Housing 0800 028 6231/ Shelter Scotland 0808 800 4444

My mental health – Child Line 0800 1111/SHOUT free text support service 'SHOUT' to '85258' /GP

My caring situation at night – SW Out of Hours – 03451 55 00 99

My cared for persons care package – Fife Carers – 01592 205472

Power Cut – 105

I'm being abused – Childline 0800 1111/Fife Womens Aid 0808 802 5555

Struggling to cope with the death of a loved one – Cruse Bereavement Care 0808 808 1677, www.hopeagain.org.uk

Fife Council Social Work Contact Centre - 0345 155 1503

You can also give us a call - FYC Office 01592 786717

*Please note that we are closed on the 25/26th of December and the 1st/2nd of January.

Stay safe this Christmas, from everyone at FYC.

Back Page Activities

When it's cold outside treat yourself to a healthy homemade vegetable soup, packed with immunity-supporting vitamin C and four of your 5-a-day

Winter Vegetable Soup

Serves 2
 Prep Time 10 mins.
 Cooking time 30 mins.

Ingredients:

- 85g dried red lentils
- 2 carrots, quartered lengthways then diced
- 3 sticks celery, sliced
- 2 small leeks, sliced
- 2 tbsp tomato purée
- 1 tbsp thyme leaves
- 3 large garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tbsp vegetable bouillon powder
- 1 heaped tsp ground coriander

Method:

- 1) Put all the ingredients into a large pan. Pour 1½ litres boiling water over the ingredients, then stir well
- 2) Cover and leave to simmer for 30 mins until the vegetables and lentils are tender.
- 3) Ladle into bowls and eat straightaway, or if you like a really thick texture, blitz a third of the soup with a hand blender or in a food processor.
- 4) Serve with some thick crusty buttered bread



Christmas Word Search



- | | | |
|-------------|------------|----------|
| CANDY CANE | HOLLY | SANTA |
| CAROLS | LIGHTS | SLEIGH |
| CHRISTMAS | MERRY | STOCKING |
| DECEMBER | NORTH POLE | TREE |
| ELVES | ORNAMENTS | WINTER |
| GINGERBREAD | PRESENTS | WREATH |
| JINGLE | REINDEER | |



If you would like anymore information or have any questions about the content of this newsletter, please contact Amber Reid, Fife Young Carers Development Worker on 01592 786717 or email amber@fifyoungcarers.co.uk