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## Annual Review **2014/15**



# Welcome to Sense Scotland



## Andy Kerr, Chief Executive

In this our thirtieth anniversary year we do not only have a chance to reflect on the wonderful journey Sense Scotland has taken, but it is also an opportunity to look forward and highlight some of our ambitions and plans for the future. This year's Annual Review does both as we report on the very best of the diverse and innovative services which we provide to over 1,000 children, young people and adults in local communities all over Scotland and sets out some of our future plans.

From inclusive events and services which support existing families to our ambitious new TouchBase centres growing across Scotland; you will see that we are determined to sustain the very best of what we do whilst also growing our Sense Scotland family.

Innovation is increasingly important for social care organisations like ourselves, so this review explores projects like our early years programme and the inspiration provided by our services users through their consultative forum, Our Voice. These developments put the people we support at the centre of the organisation and build relationships which can last a lifetime.

A big thank-you to everyone involved at Sense Scotland in whatever capacity and I hope you enjoy the review and share our excitement about what the next thirty years hold for Sense Scotland.



## Roy Cox, Chairman

It's been quite a year for both myself and Sense Scotland. I can't believe how much we've grown over the last three decades and it's great that families like mine are still at the heart of the organisation.

Of course I'm delighted to receive the recognition of the OBE this year too; an honour I share with my wife and family. I am equally clear however that the recognition is as much about the dedication and wonderful care which Sense Scotland has given to the individuals and families we support, day in day out since we first came together in 1985.

So I'd like to thank all the staff, our volunteers, funders, partners and friends of the organisation. Your commitment and care means that we can continue to support children, young people and adults with communication support needs to live active and independent lives and to have real choices in how they live their lives.

I would also like to thank my fellow Trustees for their considerable commitment and the time they give freely to Sense Scotland, however we were all saddened last year at the death of Norman Ritchie a long-serving Trustee and supporter of Sense Scotland. Thank you all.

## Our strategic priorities:

- **Personalisation (Self Directed Support):** Be the provider of choice. Be recognised for fitting our service around the needs of the individual.
- **Quality of Service:** Working in partnership with families, carers, services users, staff and other stakeholders to develop and improve service delivery and quality.
- **Sustainability and Growth:** Growing our services to the benefit of the community by providing personalised, affordable and efficient services.

# We Are Number 12



Sense Scotland was delighted to be asked to create the number 12 as part of the countdown which launched the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. Working with groups from both Glasgow and Ayrshire, art tutors James and Imelda ensured that all the participants were able to be fully involved in the construction of the giant number 12.

James explained: “It’s was an opportunity for those involved in the project to create a piece of artwork that had a function.”

“As a project, it got people working together,” added Imelda. “Because it was mobile it allowed everyone to get involved in lots of different ways.”

“When we first saw the finished piece it was amazing,” James said. “Right away we knew we had made something quite special.”

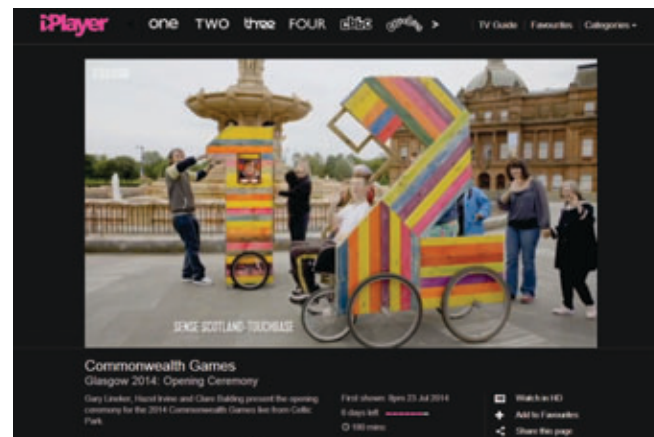
It is quite amazing to think that Sense Scotland’s No 12 reached a global TV audience of one billion

when it was revealed in the final countdown of the Opening Ceremony at the Games.

We leave the final words on the project to Aarron, who helped create the number:

“Fantastic...absolutely amazing!”

**Search for ‘Sense Scotland We are number 12’ on YouTube to view the film.**





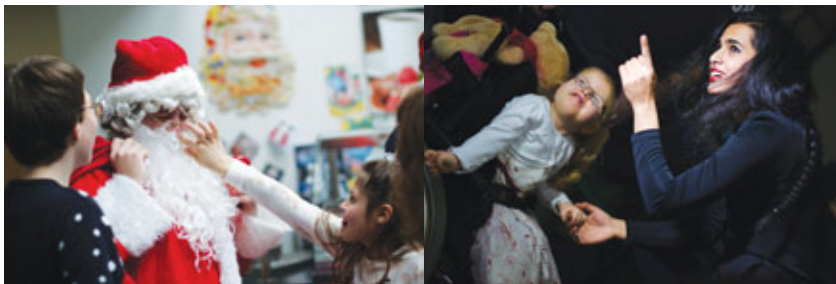
# Let's Get Social



## TouchBase Glasgow Christmas party

Children, young people and adults enjoyed festive stories, party games and a visit from Santa who had a gift for everyone thanks to the generosity and kindness of Sheikha Al-Thani. Her donation to Sense Scotland meant that groups of service users were also able to enjoy a visit to the pantomime.

She said: "I think that Sense Scotland is a wonderful place. It taught me a lot of things. Firstly that a charity is not only an organisation, it is also a family."



## Summer activity weeks:

Children and young people enjoyed four separate weeks of activities throughout July. It was a chance to make new friends, explore arts, play games and enjoy new technology, all specifically aimed for young people with communication support needs. The fantastic atmosphere of freedom and creativity resulted in some real friendships and gave families the chance of support over the summer holidays.

## Christmas in Helensburgh:

The team at our Ardlui House, our Helensburgh based short break service, took part in the town's Christmas tree festival. Working with children and young people they created an accessible tree by using board maker symbols which looked and felt fantastic.



## Festival of Fun:

Camperdown Park in Dundee at the end of the summer was the venue for our family Festival of Fun. This accessible and free event included cake and candy stalls, adapted bikes, a bouncy castle, BBQ, tepees, dancing, drumming and a host of other inclusive activities. Special thanks for Ewan's DJ set and songs from Lori and Francis.

## Perceptions in Aberdeen:

An exhibition of Sense Scotland artists comprised new works and archive material including painting, environmental art and sculpture at the 17 Gallery in Aberdeen. The work included artists from Aberdeen and across Scotland.

## For information on arts email:

[arts@sensescotland.org.uk](mailto:arts@sensescotland.org.uk)



# Let's Get Together: Family weekend



Families from across the country enjoyed a weekend of information sharing, workshops and activities all focused around the needs of their young children.

Early Years' event included accessible arts and music sessions, adapted bikes, a sensory bus and exploring wildlife. Families already supported by us met families new to Sense Scotland. Rachael Grant, Early Years Development Officer said:

"We wanted the weekend to be focussed on families getting together and connecting in an informal and fun atmosphere."

Feedback from the families told us that they enjoyed the chance to meet other parents and carers.

## **Parent comments on favourite moments:**

"It was a fantastic and very relaxed atmosphere."

"It was a very well organised, lots to do and a lot of thought went into the whole event."

"We all had a great time thanks to everyone who has made it possible."

We would like to acknowledge the support of the Scottish Government through the Third Sector Early Intervention Fund, managed on behalf of the Scottish Government by the Big Lottery Fund in Scotland. We were delighted that our initial funding for two years for the Early Years project was extended for a further 12 months.





# Positive Destinations



Pupils from some Glasgow schools have been accessing sessions for several years delivered by our arts team.

They offer a valuable opportunity for the young people to share experiences, pursue interests and develop communication skills in a safe and welcoming space. Art workers Ewan and Jenny reflected on some of the sessions they were involved in.

Ewan said: “Each tutor brings their own expertise. A theme for this project was vibrations so we come back to that, using the voice, parts of the body, objects and different ways of moving around the space. Playfulness is a good tool when you’re trying to make a connection with somebody. In this group there were loads of learning outcomes but the structure is there to engender that playful communication.”

Jenny talked about the space they use at TouchBase Glasgow:

“This is a good physical space. There are people who like to move around and use the space and others who like to stay within a smaller group.”

Thanks to Glasgow City Council for supporting this project which will be running for a further year.

The Positive Destinations project is a partnership project as part of Glasgow City Council’s Vocational Programme, providing transitional opportunities for young people preparing to leave school. It embodies the ideals of the ‘Curriculum for Excellence’

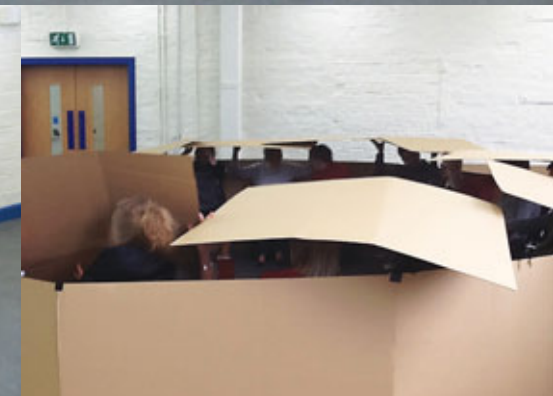
## Feedback from school staff:

“...he love’s using the wet paper pulp and the sensory feeling of the cold water and texture. He had a ball!”

“Truly awesome experience for the kids!”

“First time I have seen Joseph dance!”

“Another great session. He particularly enjoyed feeling our throat vibrations as we sang each other’s names at the end”



# What people think about Sense Scotland



We value feedback from everyone that we support and their families. Here is a snapshot of what people have been telling us over the last year.

## Aberdeen family member

Sense Scotland have always recruited good people with the right personality and attitude required for this type of work. I could not have asked for better carers.

## Ayrshire parent

The staff are very encouraging and very supportive of my daughter and of my family. My daughter enjoys her time there.

## Blantyre respite – person using service

I like being given choices at meal times and like helping by setting the table.

## Parents on Dundee Housing support services

Sense Scotland is a family to our daughter.

## Parent on Glasgow Care Home

My family always feel welcome and really like the way the staff work, they are so friendly and know how to work with each individual

## Parent on Helensburgh Respite

My daughter always comes home happy.

## Parents on Lanarkshire Housing Support

My daughter can lead an independent life which would not be possible in any other circumstances.

This is just some of the feedback we receive from families, carers and the people we support. There are a number of ways to tell us how we're doing.

Speaking directly to a member of staff, telephoning or writing to us.

**Email: [feedback@sensescotland.org.uk](mailto:feedback@sensescotland.org.uk)**

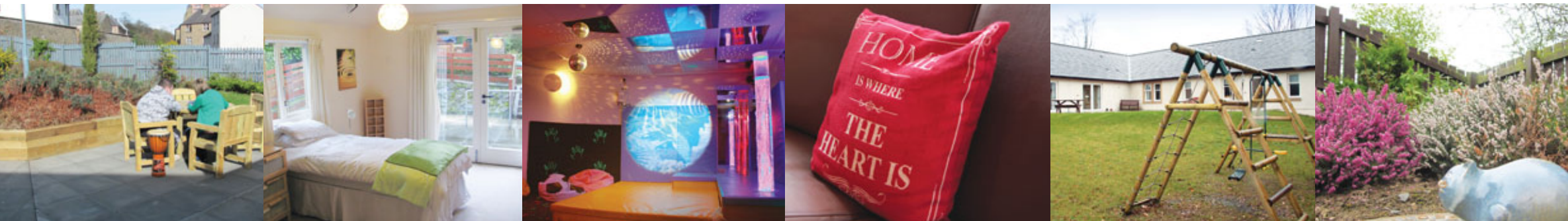
**Phone: 0300 330 9292**

Or for more information and feedback forms visit: **[www.sensescotland.org.uk/feedback](http://www.sensescotland.org.uk/feedback)**

In 2014 Sense Scotland achieved the Quality Scotland Recognised for Excellence Award. The award is for organisations that are well on their way to achieving organisational excellence.

Our CEO Andy Kerr said:

“The Recognised for Excellence award demonstrates that Sense Scotland is a high-performing organisation, dedicated to the pursuit of excellence.”





# Listen to Our Voice



Our service user consultation group celebrated their 10th anniversary with a fantastic two day conference which not only launched their new name Our Voice, it also launched their new web pages. The event featured contributions from all the members including workshops, presentations with a high point being a Radio Sensation broadcast, featuring the hilarious Lapland Bear series. There was a quiz, reflections on what people had been up to in the last year and an in depth interview by Ewan with Eddie McConnell, Director of Development.

Following a social evening at the end of day one with a DJ set, karaoke and a Chill Out lounge, the final day included health and safety information, a police visit and the chance to ride on some very cool motorbikes courtesy of Strathgryffe Motorcycle Club.

**Listen to episodes of the Lapland Bear at:**  
[audioboom.com/sensescotland](http://audioboom.com/sensescotland)

**Find out about the group online at:**  
[www.sensescotland.org.uk/community/our-voice](http://www.sensescotland.org.uk/community/our-voice)

**You can email the group at:**  
[ourvoice@sensescotland.org.uk](mailto:ourvoice@sensescotland.org.uk)



## Our Voice members:

Ailill: “You get to discuss things, meet people you know and also new people.”

Gerard: “It keeps you up to date with what’s going on.”



# Building our Future



As Sense Scotland continues to provide more care and support across the country it's worth pausing to reflect on what this growth will mean for the people and families we support.

In Ardrossan where development of our new TouchBase Ayrshire will start soon, we have long had ambitions to develop and improve the resources for people using our day services in Ayrshire. With the building scheduled to undergo refurbishment, families will soon have access to a fantastic, accessible space with a range of facilities and new opportunities for service users.

We also have our TouchBase Lanarkshire resource well underway, a new fully accessible, flexible base for the people we support. Made possible with the acquisition of the Aveyron Centre and a neighbouring vacant building from South Lanarkshire Council, both buildings will be refurbished with the addition of a new extension

to house an Activity Wing. We plan to have the service operational in early 2016.

Both resources create exciting possibilities for people using the services including:

- Supported employment
- Evening services and groups
- Base for outreach services
- Collaboration with care providers and other organisations
- Developing a range of life skills and qualifications

We are also actively looking develop similar resources in other areas in Scotland, with a particular interest in the East and North East. We'll keep you informed of these developments.



## One parent said about the TouchBase Lanarkshire project:

"I am now very excited about the development, especially the freedom and variety of services it will bring to Lynn and others."

# Our Fantastic Supporters



We continue to be overwhelmed by the generosity of our supporters. All these acts of kindness mean so much to the children, young people and adults we support. Here's a snapshot of some of our fantastic supporters.

Mr Derek Stirling funded children's holidays for years and years, initially via a trust and then as an individual. He sadly died during the year but we want to acknowledge his long-standing support.

Two of Maureen Murray's sons use our services in Dundee. Over the years she has taken part in numerous charity runs, sky dived and this year took part in the London Marathon. She raised well over £3,000 for Sense Scotland. Of the London Marathon Maureen said:

"I was very nervous about the whole thing but I made sure I finished, not just for the medal but for Sense Scotland and the great work they do."

Thanks to the wonderful generosity of all the people who supported our events, challenges and campaigns including Arran's outdoor story and Ruby's Christmas party.

As Ruby's mum Cathy said: "...we came to Sense Scotland's weekly girls' group and it was like coming home. Ruby has found a place to call her own and committed people who think only of her. For the time Ruby is here, she's the centre of the world. I can't wish for anything better."

Thanks to our many supporters Sense Scotland can continue to provide vital services and support to hundreds of children young people and adults throughout Scotland.







Six year old Arran from Edinburgh has a range of conditions which have a profound effect on how he perceives the world through all of his senses.

His mum Helen explained:

“He is very sensitive to noise, which can lead to panic attacks and seizures. As a family, we put a lot of emphasis on Arran’s quality of life - he is naturally a very happy little boy. We take nothing for granted and we are thankful for the smallest joys.”

With support from our Advisory Team Arran has had an opportunity to develop and explore the outdoors.

“My beautiful boy is happiest when outside, where the quiet swish of the trees, the softness of the ground under his feet and the feel of cool water running over his hands seems to calm his soul. We’re so lucky we can do that, but not everyone can. The specialist support we get from Sense Scotland makes Arran happy.”

On a morning out with Joe, Sense Scotland’s Outdoor and Physical Activities Co-ordinator, Arran had a fantastic time exploring and immersing himself in the environment. Helen is full of praise for the support he receives.

“I can’t tell you what it means to have someone who understands, who is innovative in their approach to help Arran communicate and have a good quality of life.”





# Cup O'Kindness



Cup O'Kindness was an evening of poetry and song inspired by Robert Burns performed and created by Sense Scotland and Artform performers and musicians, in collaboration with Paragon Music.

Ninian Perry, Creative Director of Paragon who conducted the performance said:

“Everyone was on great form and performed brilliantly. Thanks to each and every one of the performers for such a memorable night. It is always the greatest pleasure for us to be working with Sense Scotland,”

**Watch the full performance by searching for ‘Cup O Kindness Sense Scotland’ on YouTube.**



## Comments from parents of performers:

“Wonderful performance. Everyone involved should be very proud.”

“Thanks to the team for the fantastic work. My son gets so much from the group. The show was brilliant, thoroughly enjoyed it.”





# Partners in Communication



Over the last three years, Sense Scotland's Partners in Communication (PIC) team has been learning alongside people with communication support needs and partner organisations, about what needs to be done before an organisation can regard itself an 'inclusive communication' organisation. Some steps involve a change of attitude and approach and some steps require a much more comprehensive look at all the functions of an organisation.

Funded by the Scottish Government, the project has received additional funding to carry on with a second phase project, titled Partners in the Community.

The end of the project was celebrated with an event for professionals sharing inclusive practice approaches and technology.

It also launched a new online resource which can be accessed at:

**[partnersincommunication.info](http://partnersincommunication.info)**

This site is open to contributions and enquiries from professionals, families and carers and people with communication support needs.

**If you have something to share then please contact [pic@sensescotland.org.uk](mailto:pic@sensescotland.org.uk)**

## Comments on the Partners in Communication event:

"The whole day was a huge success with partnership working being the priority."

"It was refreshing to attend an event which is focused entirely on the users."



# A Global Impact



Sense Scotland partners a number of international projects which support disabled children, adults, their families and communities. Providing resources and training, we support local communities to develop new approaches ensuring disabled people are actively included in their community.

**Malawi:** Our Malawi project aims to increase access to education for hearing impaired children and young people. Project partners are the Scottish Government, the Woodford Foundation Scotland, Signal, and the Central Church of Africa Presbyterian Livingstonia Synod.

8 year old Joseph lives in Kathewela village in Mzimba South, Malawi. Family awareness and communication training helped Joseph's parents and encouraged other families to take their hearing impaired children to school. Parents also joined a school based support group.

Joseph's dad Winfrey said: "The training helped me gain confidence. Now my child has gone to a new class, Standard 3."

Our Chief Executive Andy Kerr visited Malawi in 2014: "The project builds from the community upwards, allowing people to understand disability. It changes entirely the outlook of not just the individual but the community itself."



**Bangladesh:** With Sense International, Sense India and the Centre for Disability in Development, Sense Scotland links to projects across Bangladesh which support access to health, education and advocacy. Training is given for adults in work and life skills, while children are helped to develop their communication and mobility, to grow their independence.

Despite 7 year old Aminul's dual sensory, speech and physical impairments, project partner, Research and Educative Action on Disability has helped his learning and development. They have assisted him to walk on his own, speak some words and express some of his needs. Mum, Farida has been provided with financial and emotional support to start her own catering business.

"Earlier I didn't have any hope for my son and for me," said Farida. "Now I'm financially independent and I can dream for my son."

**Projects are funded by the Scottish Government**





# A year with Sense Scotland



## April 2014:

Our siblings group had a brilliant Easter break in Lochgoilhead with raft building, archery and kayaking.

## May 2014:

Art On The Hill as part of Glasgow's Southside Festival features work from Sense Scotland artists Amanda McLeish and David Barr.

## June 2014:

Take the Lead our first sponsored dog walk in Aberdeen takes place. Sense Scotland awarded the Recognised for Excellence Award at the Quality Scotland Scottish Business Excellence Awards.

## July 2014:

Our No 12 Sculpture stars at Commonwealth Opening Ceremony and Sense Scotland musicians perform at BBC Commonwealth Games music festival.

Sensory Summer from our arts team entertains hundreds at charity partner the St Enoch Centre.

## August 2014:

Mini music festival Summer Sensations celebrates the launch of our Music Initiative 'Soundwaves' project, funded by Creative Scotland's Youth Music Initiative.

## September 2014:

Kinning Park Nursery Hyde N' Seek donate fundraised money and visit TouchBase Glasgow

## October 2014:

Specsavers Airdrie arranged a football game raising funds and awareness for Sense Scotland at Airdrie FC's home ground Excelsior Stadium.





# A Year with Sense Scotland



## November 2014:

Thanks to everyone's fantastic support Sense Scotland won £3,000 from the Bank of Scotland.

## December 2014:

Christmas Concert at the Glasgow City Chambers featured schools, our own TouchBeats and families and friends, celebrating music and the festive spirit.

## January 2015:

Sense Scotland's Chairman Roy Cox recognised with an OBE.

## February 2015:

P7 Greyfriars pupil Christina did a sponsored silence and talked her whole class into taking part and have raised over £435; they visited our St Andrews Shop to hand over a cheque.

Congratulations to all our learners who achieved their ASDAN Awards and were presented at our annual ceremony.

## March 2015:

Staff and Volunteer Award winners were chosen ahead of a fantastic red carpet event at TouchBase Glasgow. The winners were:

**The Big Idea Award** - One Giant Leap

**The Inspiration Award** - Anne Sutherland, Training Coordinator

**Volunteer of the Year** - Martha Dewar, Parkhead shop

**Special Recognition Award** - Liz Cox

**The Chairman's Award for Excellence** - Coatbridge Housing Support

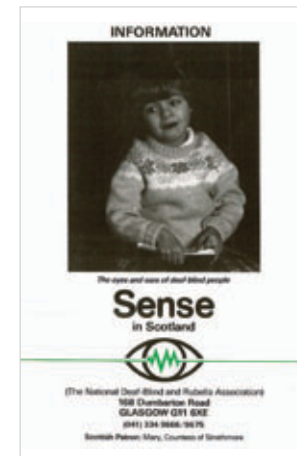
**Team of the Year - Winner** - Central Region, Alford Relief Team





Andy Kerr, Chief Executive:  
“We couldn’t finish this annual review without reflecting on the last 30 years of this remarkable organisation. Started by a group of determined parents, fighting for a better quality of life for their children we now support over 1,000 people at all stages of their lives across Scotland.

It continues to be exciting and an immense privilege to work with the dedicated staff, volunteers, families and the people we support. Like them, I’m committed to ensuring that we continue to provide the children, young people and adults we support with a full range of opportunities and resources to help them lead meaningful and independent lives.”



# Thanks



A M Pilkington's Charitable Trust	Bruce Chalmers	Ena E MacPherson	John M Macharg	NHS Section 16B Core Grant
Aberbrothock Charitable Trust	Buchanan H Isabella	Evelyn Sutherland	Lawrence Knowles	NHS Tayside
Agnes Donnelly	Callendar Charitable Trust	Foresters Friendly Society	Livingston and District Dolphins	Norna F Crabbe
Alexander McDonnell	Catherine E Morrice	G E I Maitland-Carew	Lloyds Banking	Pat on the Back
Alexander Moncur Trust	Charles E MacIntyre	Garrowhill Bowling Club - Ladies Section	Lodge St Andrew 524	Paths for All
Amey Infrastructure Services	Chemring Energetics UK	Glasgow City Council – City Chambers	M M Grimm	Patricia Gibb
Andrew Paton's Charitable Trust	Childrens' Aid (Scotland) Ltd	Glasgow Life	M M. Anne Wilkie	Paul Charitable Trust
Audrey Rattray	Chivas Brothers Pernod Ricard Ltd	Haggs Castle Golf Club (Ladies Section)	Margaret Gorrie	Peter Coats Trust
Avril Williamson	Creative Scotland	Harold Merton Adams Trust	Mat Murney	PF Charitable Trust
Awards For All	D G Harcus	Harry McColl	Maureen Murray	Provincial Grand Lodge of Glasgow and West of Scotland
B E Brooks	Daphne Culley	Helen F Lloyd-Jones	May Dundas	R J Larg Family Trust
Bank of Scotland Community Fund	Denholms Bar	Hugh Fraser Foundation	MEB Charitable Trust	Radio Clyde Cash For Kids
Barbara Carson	Derrick Muir	Hyde "N" Seek Nurseries (Kinning Park)	Merkland Tank Ltd	Rosemary Whitehead
BBC Children In Need Scotland	Dowager Countess of Strathmore LLD DL	Hyde "N" Seek Nurseries (Kinning Park)	Miss Agnes H Hunter's Trust	Sandra Sapeluk
Borders Friends Group	Dr Alistair S L Rae	Iris Spink Fund	Moir R. Mackie	Sanquhar
Brian Cairns	Duncan Holmes	James Chapman (Butchers) Ltd	Mr Derek Stirling	Congregational Church
British Polythene Industries PLC	Eastwood Rotary Club	James H Christie	Mrs JT Isles -Denny's Charitable Trust	SATUC
	Edinburgh City Council	Jean Hendry	Nancy Brown's Charitable Trust	Scott MacPherson
	Elizabeth Baker	John Annand	NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde	Scottish Government Asia Development Programme
	Elizabeth Campbell			

Scottish Government Equality Fund

Scottish Government Malawi Development Programme

Scottish Government Strategic Partnership Fund

Scottish Government Third Sector Early Intervention Fund

Scottish Natural Heritage

Shankar Rao

Shortreed Family

St Enoch Centre

St Ninians Church

Suburban Taverns Limited Charitable Trust

Talleg Limited

The Ann Jane Green Trust

The Big Lottery Fund

The Biggart Trust

The Diocese of St Andrews Dunkeld and Dunblane

The Duchess of Sutherland

The Ecton Charitable Trust

The Gannochy Trust

The Gemmell Bequest Fund

The Gordon Fraser Charitable Trust

The Highgate Charitable Trust

The Jennie S Gordon Memorial Foundation

The John M Archer Charitable Trust

The JTH Charitable Trust

The Leng Charitable Trust

The MacLennan Trust

The Maidenwell Charitable Trust

The Martin Connell Charitable Trust

The Miller Foundation

The Moffat Charitable Trust

The New Maclay Murray & Spens Charitable Trust

The Paterson Logan Charitable Trust

The Peter Brough Bequest Fund

The Postcode Trust

The RKT Harris Charitable Trust

The Robertson Trust

The Ronald Miller Foundation

The Royal Caledonian Ball

The RS Macdonald Charitable Trust

The Russell Trust

The Saints and Sinners Club of Scotland

The St Katharine's Fund

The Sylvia Aitken Charitable Trust

The Trinafour Trust

The W M Mann Foundation

The William S. Phillips' Fund

Total E & P UK Plc

University Of Stirling

Viewpark Parish Church

Voluntary Sector Development Fund

W A Cargill Fund

W Davidson & Sons Ltd

Whitburn Pentecostal Church

William Cameron

Wilson Andrews

Yorkshire Building Society Charitable Foundation

## How can we support you?

- Information and Advice
- Early Years support
- Support for children and young people
- Support for adults
- Support to live in your own home
- Taking a short break
- Parent Enabler Project
- TouchBase
- Arts Programme
- One Giant Leap Project
- Outdoor Activities
- Partners in Communication.

## How can you get involved?

- Support our fundraising across Scotland
- Join us as a staff member or volunteer
- Use Glasgow's TouchBase Business Centre for meetings, events and office spaces
- Visit one of our many shops across Scotland.



## Sense Scotland Central Region, West Region and Head Office

Sense Scotland  
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