



Bighearted Scotland

Creating positive futures together

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Update Summer '21 edition

Spina Bifida
Hydrocephalus
Scotland



Thank YOU!

Thanks to all of you, the Bighearted Scotland supporters, £20,000 in donations has just been shared equally between the 5 Bighearted Scotland charities at a time when they need it the most.

Erskine, Spina Bifida Hydrocephalus Scotland, Penumbra, One Kind and Epilepsy Scotland have all continued their work across Scotland despite the many, many challenges they have faced over the past 16 months due to Covid-19. The donations they receive through Bighearted Scotland are essential in helping reach their annual fundraising targets to continue that essential work now and for the year ahead. Read on to find out how your donations have been put to good use...

Listening to families at Spina Bifida Hydrocephalus (SBH) Scotland

Despite the pandemic, SBH Scotland have continued our family and clinical support service through a helpline, utilising Zoom, regular check-in calls with vulnerable members and virtual support and social groups for all age groups.

Additionally we've been working on projects focusing on the health and wellbeing of our members; specifically looking at ways to support an easier transition from children's healthcare services to adult services and supporting better mental health in adults. All with the aim that all those affected by these lifelong, complex disabilities are empowered to self-manage their own condition(s) and live as independently as possible.

One of the many positive elements of our projects has led to the creation of a series of films 'Our Voices' where SBH Scotland members and/or their parents tell their story; talking about the most impactful points in their own personal journey with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus. Through a series of online storytelling workshops members shared their stories to support future healthcare professionals whilst SBH Scotland members may feel comforted, knowing they are not alone in their own feelings.

Kirstie Dawson was one of the SBH Scotland parents who kindly shared her story for the 'Our Voices' series in the hope that it would help other families. She recalls her daughter Meggan's birth (28 years ago) saying,

"There's no handbook. I was 19 years old and about to have a baby, and this was not the plan. Meggan was delivered prematurely. I stared at this little thing in an incubator and thought she was the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen but I knew at this moment that my life was about to change."

Kirstie goes on to say, "Life was challenging and very scary at times but having paediatricians there to reassure at all the life changing stages of Meggan would help keep the balance between fear and hope."

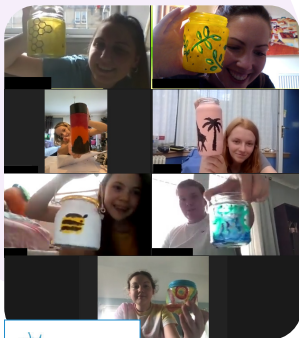
We look forward to sharing the 'Our Voices' series being available to watch on our YouTube Channel soon at www.youtube.com/user/ScottishSpinaBifida

Spina Bifida
Hydrocephalus
Scotland



For more information
visit: sbhscotland.org.uk
Or call: 03455 211300

[f facebook.com/SBHScotland](https://www.facebook.com/SBHScotland)



For more information visit:
epilepsyscotland.org.uk

Epilepsy Scotland

The COVID-19 pandemic fuelled feelings of loneliness for some of the young people in our groups. To support young people through this difficult time, Epilepsy Scotland remained in contact to help work through this, providing 1-to-1 and digital youth groups as well as digital activities and resources.

The impact of COVID-19 presented a huge increase in digital familiarity and the use of software like Zoom opened doors for our youth work. Unsurprisingly, young people in our groups proved skilled with technology, taught staff a thing or two and adapted well to the new ways of communicating. That said, our youth workers and young people are really looking forward to returning to face-to-face working.

In the meantime, here are three ways the pandemic has shaped youth work at Epilepsy Scotland.

1. Welcoming more young people

With no hard geographical boundaries, we have been able to welcome more young people from further afield in Scotland who previously may not have been able to travel to our groups. Our youth groups in Edinburgh and Glasgow now meet regularly online and this has meant that new friendships have formed. The group even met online with Epilepsy Warriors Foundation in Malawi.

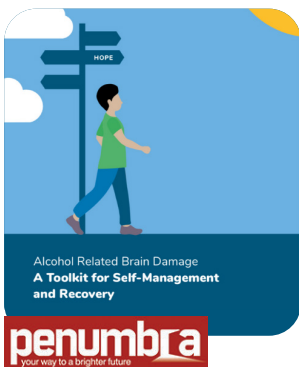
We have also introduced an online group for children aged 8-11, self-named the Purple Pandas. We intend to keep our digital youth groups going alongside the face-to-face groups in the future.

2. Youth Ambassadors

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions has meant that our school awareness talks have been postponed since March 2020. At the beginning of 2021, we formed a group of older Youth Ambassadors (16-18-year-olds from our youth groups) who wished to work together to raise the voice of young people with an experience of epilepsy within Scotland. One of the first tasks they set themselves was to develop and produce online resources for schools including videos and animations. The ambassadors will provide valuable insight to support younger children as they have experience of managing their own seizures in school. It is also a good opportunity for them to get experience working on a meaningful project.

3. Happy Mail

We realised that our youth group were enjoying receiving activity packs through the post, so we introduced Happy Mail. Our Happy Mail is a monthly personalised letter and activity pack sent to any young person diagnosed with epilepsy in Scotland, with a different theme each month. It is completely free and open to young people across the UK. **If you know anyone who might benefit from our Happy Mail please email our Assistant Youth Worker, Aimee, at alothian@epilepsyscotland.org.uk**



For more information visit: penumbra.org.uk

You can find Penumbra on social media:



facebook.com/PenumbraScotland



twitter.com/penumbra_scot

Supporting mental health and wellbeing at Penumbra

As we reflect on the impact of lockdown on people's mental health and wellbeing, Mental Health Awareness Week was an ideal opportunity to share lots of inspiring recovery journeys.

We were thrilled too to participate in BBC Radio Scotland's Afternoon Show. The show featured a series of monologues telling stories of men and their lived experience of mental ill health and included an on air discussion between peer worker George who has lived experience of mental ill health and Penumbra's Chief Executive, Nigel Henderson.

We were also delighted to participate in a film from our friends at the SCVO highlighting the **#NeverMoreNeeded** impact of the third sector during the pandemic. As part of the feature, Nikki Byrne talked about her experience of accessing support from our Fife self-harm team - thanks Nikki!

There have been some exciting developments from Penumbra's innovations team recently! On June 2nd we launched a self-management wellbeing toolkit for people living with alcohol related brain damage (ARBD). This piece of work is especially exciting because whilst clinical practice guidelines for the medical treatment of ARBD exist, we believe our comprehensive recovery focussed approach may be the first of its kind in Scotland designed for use by people living with ARBD. This piece of work is something to feel super proud about, not least because it has been informed by lived experience. Indeed, our ARBD teams and people accessing our services have been a vital part of that co-creation.

We have also launched our new strategy. The strategy is for 3 years during which time we expect that the Scottish Government will be implementing the recommendations of the Independent Review of Adult Social Care. This is likely to lead to changes in the way social care is organised, commissioned and funded. Mental health is now a significant priority for public agencies and the general public in Scotland. The Covid 19 pandemic has shown the need for more investment in mental health and wellbeing and we expect to see new opportunities to develop dynamic, hopeful and person centred activities over the next few years.

OneKind: Demanding More for Scotland's Animals

For over 100 years, OneKind has been ending cruelty to Scotland's animals and giving them a voice. Despite having to cancel all fundraising and public events for the past year, the team have been working hard to deliver change for Scotland's animals and so far, 2021 has been busier than ever!

Since launching their manifesto last year, Scotland's leading animal campaigns charity has been working tirelessly to demand that political parties do not leave animals off their agenda, calling for greater public education services and welfare standards. To support this, OneKind launched "Webinars for Welfare", a series of webinars whereby various animal welfare experts shared their knowledge and raised awareness of different issues, including companion animal wellbeing, urban wildlife welfare, incorporating welfare into conservation and much more! Now available on YouTube, OneKind's webinars gave supporters the opportunity to learn more about understanding animals' needs and covered a broad range of welfare concerns that OneKind is working hard to change.

Now that the elections have taken place, OneKind is committed to working with the Scottish Government to ensure those promises made are delivered. These promises include:

- ★ Moving to completely free range, barn or woodland egg and chicken production
- ★ Banning the live export of animals for fattening and slaughter
- ★ Closing the loopholes in existing legislation to protect foxes and other wild mammals

In June, the UK Government introduced the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill to parliament, which introduces a ban on the live export of farmed animals for fattening or slaughter, from or through Great Britain. OneKind is working hard to ensure a live exports ban is introduced at the same time across Great Britain, and as soon as possible.

Also in June, the European Parliament voted to ban cages for farmed animals across the EU. The SNP manifesto committed to stay broadly aligned to EU policies on farming and so an EU ban would give OneKind even more strength to demand a ban on farmed animal cages in Scotland.

Unfortunately, not all OneKind's manifesto asks, such as securing a moratorium on the growth of the Scottish salmon farming industry, were addressed by the Government, so they will continue to demand for change on these issues as well. In March, OneKind co-authored a report on the Scottish salmon farming industry with Compassion in World Farming, revealing the welfare and environmental issues occurring in these farms. As an evidence-based charity, investigations and factual reporting are at the heart of their work as they make the case for improved animal welfare standards across Scotland.

OneKind relies on the generosity of supporters to raise the £300,000 they need each year, to maintain the current level of campaigns; raise awareness and expose cruelty. 2020 challenged them to identify new fundraising opportunities as well as different ways for people to get involved, to support their ongoing work. As a result, OneKind launched their lottery in January and have over 120 players contributing over £4,500 each year to support their work.



**For more
information visit:
onekind.scot**

**You can contact our
helpline on:
0808 800 2200**

What our charities have been doing this past year





For more information
visit: erskine.org.uk

Erskine; Building a future for veterans

Scotland's largest Veteran's charity Erskine has unveiled a £4 million state-of-the-art residential development to support Veterans as they transition away from the military.

David Boyle Court, based within Erskine's Veterans Village in Bishopton, features 24 single occupancy apartments that come fully furnished, complete with living and dining spaces, kitchen, bedroom, and an en-suite wet room. There are also four fully accessible apartments. The new facility features two communal spaces which will be used for training, one-to-one counselling, and skills development, and one that can also be used as a cinema room.

Each resident will have access to all the facilities in the Veterans' Village, including the Erskine Reid Macewen Activity Centre (ERMAC). ERMAC aims to enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of Veterans in the community by providing them with an increased social network, a range of purposeful activities supported by a skilled team, and access to support services and new skills.

The Erskine Village also offers a range of other amenities, including Harry's Café, the Royal Scots Shop, a hairdresser, and a podiatrist.

As part of this support service, Erskine will offer each resident a bespoke support package tailored to suit their needs, including volunteering, training, and work experience, as well as job opportunities with local business partners. The support is aimed at equipping Veterans with the skills to move onto sustained employment and long-term accommodation in an area of their choice.

Wing Commander Ian Cumming, Erskine Chief Executive, said: "Erskine's strength lies in the very special blend of dedicated care, compassion and understanding that we offer our residents, tenants and their families. Many of us, myself included, have served in the military and this enhances our understanding of some of the challenges they face.

"David Boyle Court is just the latest project in a lifetime of tireless work aimed at providing support and care to Veterans. Veterans have a great deal to offer civilian society and most transition seamlessly. However, like most people who change career, they need support and new skills to help with the transition. This project will give them time and space to get the best possible support to develop and showcase their talents as they re-prepare for civilian life. This significant investment signals an exciting chapter for the charity and a bright future for our Veterans".

3 simple ways you can help to impact a life:

Payroll Giving?

Would you like to start Payroll Giving or increase your contribution to Bighearted Scotland? For further details please email: trustees@bigheartedscotland.org for full details on how easy that can be, or contact your HR Department.

Justgiving.com

Justgiving.com is the no.1 way for our fundraisers to raise funds.

Bighearted Scotland would love for you to take part in any form of fundraising activity for us and the simplest way to raise funds is online through

JustGiving.com/bigheartedscotland

For paper sponsor forms, more details or to keep us up to date with your fundraising activities please contact **Sheena Breeze** on **0131 475 2549** or email: trustees@bigheartedscotland.org

A big thank you to all of our fundraisers who have made a big difference to our five Scottish charities.

For more information, please visit:

www.bigheartedscotland.org.uk

Bighearted Scotland is a charity (SC023039) and a company limited by guarantee (SC390449) Registered Office: Lindsays: Caledonian Exchange, 19a Canning Street, Edinburgh EH3 8HE.

Donate today!

We are incredibly grateful for your continued support but during the Summer months can you give a little more and make an even bigger impact on the lives of those you are already helping?



Would you consider an extra, one-off donation of **£5, £10, £20 or £50?**

A single donation can be made either by visiting **www.justgiving.com/bigheartedscotland** or by sending a cheque or postal order made payable to **'Bighearted Scotland'** to: **Bighearted Scotland, Lindsays: Caledonian Exchange, 19a Canning Street, Edinburgh EH3 8HE.**

Bighearted Scotland takes data protection very seriously. If, at any time, you no longer wish for us to contact you with information on our charity please email trustees@bigheartedscotland.org with your details and we will unsubscribe you from receiving further correspondence.

To help keep our costs down and receive this update by email next time, please get in touch and provide your preferred email address: trustees@bigheartedscotland.org



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ERSKINE
Caring for Veterans since 1916

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 **OneKind**
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