



# PKAVS

*Making the Difference*

*Autumn/Winter 2013*

## 12 Days of Christmas Appeal

**...You can help make  
all the difference**

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# Welcome



Following the great success of our inaugural newsletter, we are delighted to update you with PKAVS' latest news in our second edition.

Eight months into the financial year and life at PKAVS has, quite simply, never been busier. Our recent AGM celebrated a year of wide-ranging service delivery across Perth & Kinross and the achievements of our staff and volunteers. We heard from Abbie, a 13-year old Young Carer, who shared the challenges of growing up with caring responsibilities for her siblings and the lifeline that is PKAVS.

The summer and autumn months have seen growth and increased demand across all services and our fundraising team has worked hard to ensure we can sustain this vital work. From a 1920s Hollywood Charity Ball to a Pantomime Horse Race at Perth Races, there is very little that the PKAVS team won't turn their hand to! As we prepare for the winter season and work to ensure services are in place for some of the most vulnerable people in our communities, we hope you will support our 12 Days of Christmas Appeal and help us 'Make the Difference'.



*Helen MacKinnon,*  
Chief Executive



*Hollywood  
Charity Ball*



*Panto Horse Race*



PKAVS is the leading charity advancing lives of thousands of people and the voluntary sector in Perth and Kinross.

# PKAVS 12 Days of Christmas Appeal

PKAVS has a vision that unpaid carers, people recovering from mental illness and individuals from minority ethnic communities have all the support and care they need, when they need it, right here in Perth & Kinross.

There are many reasons why the people we help get into difficulty - stress, loneliness, stigma and isolation to name but a few. Take for example:

- 12 year old Darren, referred to us as the responsibilities of looking after his mum and brothers at home had become unbearable.
- Or Sarah, who accessed our Mental Wellbeing Service after leaving psychiatric care as she was struggling to cope with daily life.
- Or Huang and his elderly parents who were facing homelessness and living in fear of eviction.

For over 40 years, PKAVS has helped thousands of people like Darren, Sarah and Huang. But we need your help to continue our vital work.

Please consider making this year's '12 Days of Christmas Appeal' a success by donating £5, £10, or as much as you can afford today. Simply go to [www.pkavs.org.uk](http://www.pkavs.org.uk) or call 01738 567076.



**Our challenge is to raise £12,000 this Christmas and with your help we can make it a reality!**

If you have any FUN-draising ideas for the appeal, please get in touch!

Thank you, The PKAVS Team



# Annual Carers Conference

The Carers Conference, held in October and jointly hosted by PKAVS and Perth & Kinross Council, provided an opportunity for Carers' views on their services to be heard as the new Carers Strategy is being prepared for 2014-17.

The conference was also an opportunity for Carers to meet one another and find out about existing services such as PKAVS' one-to-one and group support, as well as a chance to relax and try out some complementary therapies, singing workshops and storytelling. A huge thank you goes to all the carers who came and contributed to the day; we hope it was beneficial and informative for you all.



*Did you know?*  
It is estimated that Scotland's unpaid Carers save the government £7.6 million a year!

## Success for Carers Therapies!

In the last newsletter, we reported that the Carers Therapies sessions had to be scaled back due to lack of funds. Well we're delighted to say that thanks to the dedication of our staff team and support from Creative Breaks and The Souter Trust, the therapies are now reinstated in Aberfeldy, Crieff, Perth and Kinross!



The sessions are a valuable way of supporting unpaid carers as it gives them some much needed time off from their caring roles and a way to recharge their batteries.

To find out more about the Carers Therapy timetable, please contact [mary.giles@pkavs.org.uk](mailto:mary.giles@pkavs.org.uk)



# Summertime fun for the Young Carers Project



The summer was another busy period for the Young Carers Project with more referrals than ever being received and more new Young Carers being supported. This year during the school holidays, a total of 90 children enjoyed trips to Devon, Mull, Alton Towers and the Scottish Young Carers festival, giving them a well deserved break from their caring role. Numerous day trips were

also organised, with the Young Carers enjoying visits to Drummond Safari Park and the Scottish Sea Life Centre, often in very high spirits!

After attending one of the residential trips, one Young Carer commented that ***“this was the best trip of my life!”***

## Case Study of an Adult Carer

Barbara\* was referred to PKAVS Carers Services in February as she had been caring for her husband Bill for the last three years. He had been diagnosed with throat cancer. Although still capable of looking after himself physically, verbal communication was difficult, so Barbara often acted as his ‘voice’, making and answering phone calls on his behalf. As his main carer, she was also watching over him at night, and administering his medication. Because of her responsibility, Barbara’s emotional and physical health were being affected. She became very

stressed, was not sleeping and had been diagnosed with irritable bowel syndrome. A Carers Support Worker visited her in her home to talk things through and make an action plan. They put her in touch with other relevant services, suggested she start attending one of PKAVS’ support groups and gave her advice on relaxation techniques. They arranged further meeting to see how she was progressing. Unfortunately, Bill is now in terminal care, but Barbara knows PKAVS Carers Services is here for her in her role as carer.

*\*not her real name*

# Shopmobility Award



PKAVS' Shopmobility service, which provides electric scooters and wheelchairs as mobility support, won the prestigious Tom Hillier Award from the National Federation of Shopmobility recently. Service user Joan nominated the project, commenting "I have severe osteoarthritis in both knees so Shopmobility makes life so much easier. Dave and the team are absolutely wonderful, nothing is ever too much bother". We are delighted Shopmobility received this national recognition for its work. Well done Shopmobility!

## Christmas wreaths - order yours now!

Christmas wreaths are available to order from now until Monday 16th December. Made by our Mental Wellbeing Service clients, all wreaths are beautifully crafted out of natural materials and will brighten the door of any home this season. And what's more, all proceeds will go to supporting people recovering from mental illness in Perth & Kinross!

A willow wreath costs £8 and a traditional wreath is £15. The last day for collection is on Wednesday 18th December. To order your Christmas wreath please call The Walled Garden staff in Perth on 01738 631777.



## Creative Local Initiative

An innovative project was launched in Highland Perthshire with the help from our Change Fund team, students from Duncan of Jordanstone School of Art & Design and NHS Tayside and other key partners. Designed to help improve the care and support for people in the area, the project involves workshop sessions and has funding to help new enterprises get up and running.

For more details contact our Change Fund team on 01738 567076.



# Bloomin' Good Summer Garden Party!



The Summer Garden Party in August got off to a wet start, but that didn't deter people

coming along to enjoy the live music, BBQ and the sight of The Walled Garden in full bloom. In spite of the weather the day raised over £2,100 which included £550 raised by a long standing client of the service.

Cully had been nurturing a rather fine beard for many months and was sponsored to have it shorn off on the day! The day was greatly enjoyed by all who came.



# Gone Fishing



Mental Wellbeing clients and volunteers at Wisecraft in Blairgowrie have again enjoyed another successful fishing season with their Angling Club. Three more clients joined the club this year, taking the group to 14 keen amateur fishermen and women. With the season drawing to a close,

an annual end of season party and award night was held. George Gray was crowned Champion Angler for the second year running, closely followed by Peter Sheurl and Arthur Donaldson won the award for biggest fish caught with a trout weighing in at 3lb 15oz!

Laura Pack, Mental Wellbeing Services Coordinator said *"The fishing group has been a real success for us this year. The people we help benefit greatly from the chance to be out in nature, having fun and learning something new. I see the smiles on their faces at the end of each session - even the ones who didn't catch anything!"*

# MEAD makes a difference



“I’d like to tell you about a family MEAD helped recently. Originally from China, Huang\* and his parents had lived in Scotland for 20 years.

The parents, both in their 60s, spoke very little English and relied on their son’s local business for the family’s livelihood. Following the recession, the business suffered and eventually failed, putting the family into bankruptcy as they had used their own house to guarantee a business loan. Huang became depressed and isolated himself from his family and friends. Eventually, the courts ruled they were to be evicted within three weeks.

Desperately worried they would be made homeless, they approached MEAD for help. One of our Development Workers set up an appointment with the Citizen’s Advice Bureau and translated the meeting for the parents. She also arranged meetings with a solicitor and a housing charity to explore the case and to try and appeal the decision. Unfortunately the appeal failed and the eviction was set to go ahead, so she then helped them find temporary accommodation which avoided them

being out on the street. She is now working with them to help them find their feet again.

***“Without MEAD, we felt helpless and hopeless as we did not know how to get out of the deep ditch in time! I am speechless to say how much I am grateful to MEAD”.***

Hearing those words really validates what we do to help people. We often see elderly people, like Huang’s parents, struggling to understand the social and legal system in the UK. However our staff can intervene to make things less frightening for them by offering a sympathetic ear and some advice.”

*Mohammed Afzal,*  
MEAD Manager



*\*not his real name*



# Question Time with Politicians

In September, over 40 people attended an MPs Question time organised by VAP with Pete Wishart MP (SNP), Murdo Fraser MSP (Conservative), Claire Baker MSP (Labour) and Willie Rennie MSP (Liberal Democrats) who responded to questions about wide ranging issues affecting our communities and the Voluntary

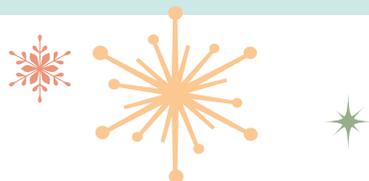


Sector. Both the politicians and the audience felt that the event was very worthwhile as a way of exchanging views and raising local issues.



# Growing Our Knowledge of Social Enterprise

In October, VAP spent a day at the Scottish Woodland Skills Centre, a Social Enterprise run by Community Tree Cycle near Alyth. Community Tree Cycle supports rural employment and sustainable management of woodlands through the sale of woodfuel, a professional tree surgery service and other related services. They also offer traditional woodland crafts training. The Voluntary Action Perthshire team not only gained an insight into how this social enterprise works, but they also rolled their sleeves up and learned how to craft green wood using traditional tools and how to make shelters.



# Forever dancing!



Everyone likes a good ceilidh especially us here at PKAVS! Our Carers Services held a Carers Ceilidh in August which saw over 100 carers take part in a night of fun to celebrate national Carers Week.

The evening included sets from The Blairgowrie Pipe Band and The Gateway Fiddlers, who filled the floor with their traditional ceilidh tunes, and an impressive show by dancers from Julie Young Dance Studios. And earlier this month, our MEAD team ably organised our annual Casual Ceilidh, bringing together people from all walks of life to raise much needed funds for our work.



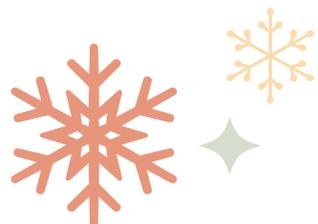
The night included music from Din Raisin and a raffle of excellent prizes.

# Christmas Goodwill Scheme



PKAVS Christmas Goodwill Scheme is gearing up for a busy season. In addition to our '12 Days of Christmas' Appeal (more on page 3), we are inviting church and community groups to get in touch with cash donations to support the distribution of hundreds of food, fuel and gift vouchers to impoverished children, families and the elderly in Perth & Kinross. With much thanks going to The Cameron Group for their generous donation of £5,000 towards the scheme.

Kerrigan Bell, Fundraising and Marketing Manager said *“The change we made last year to giving out vouchers instead of gifts was well received so we are continuing with this approach again this year. I’d love to hear from any groups that want to make a donation to the scheme as we all know that kindness at Christmas can change lives.”*



# Charity Ball Extravaganza

Supporters from communities and businesses alike joined PKAVS for a 1920s extravaganza at the Dunkeld Hilton recently. Inspired by the Great Gatsby, guests enjoyed sounds of a Dixieland jazz quartet, and helped raise over £8,000 for our vital work through an auction and raffle.



Chief Executive Helen Mackinnon said *“Never before have our guests so thoroughly embraced our theme - from top hats and tails to flapper dresses and feathers, the evening was a step back in time and the atmosphere was fantastic”*.



## New Annual Report

PKAVS latest Annual Report, covering the year 2012/13 is now out and is full of highlights and information about the very real difference we make to people in Perth & Kinross. If you would like to find out more about our activities from this time, please email [admin@pkavs.org.uk](mailto:admin@pkavs.org.uk) to request your electronic copy.



**PKAVS Christmas Shutdown**  
Please note that PKAVS closes for Christmas! Our offices are closed 21st December 2013 - 4th January 2014. This includes The Gateway, MEAD office, Wisecraft and The Walled Garden. Shopmobility will be open on the 23rd and 24th December, though phone in advance to confirm.

This is the second of our bi-annual newsletters and we hope you have enjoyed reading them so far. We would love to hear your comments and feedback or if you have any ideas for future articles, please get in touch at: [fundraising@pkavs.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@pkavs.org.uk)

# New websites launched!

We are delighted to share with you our two new websites, [www.pkavs.org.uk](http://www.pkavs.org.uk) and [www.vaperthshire.org.uk](http://www.vaperthshire.org.uk). These replace the previous sites and integrate MEAD's own website, to streamline and improve how we share information about the work we do. The new sites are more easily accessible and are available to read in lots of different languages including Polish, Urdu and Chinese! The PKAVS site also makes it easier for you to make a donation to support our services, either through PayPal or by debit or credit card. Thanks to Awards for All for making this development possible. We'd love to hear your comments and feedback on the new sites. We hope you like them!

AWARDS  
FOR ALL  
SCOTLAND



## PKAVS' work includes:

- CARERS SERVICES
- SERVICES FOR MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES
- MENTAL WELLBEING SERVICES
- VOLUNTARY ACTION PERTHSHIRE
- SHOPMOBILITY

## Contact us...

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