

## FIRST WORD

*Welcome to the June edition of PLUSPoint.*

Most of you will be pleased to read that money from a TV phone scam has been put to good use in an advertising campaign by Alzheimers Scotland (National News) and about the success of a Comrie Trust in gaining substantial funding to enliven their community. This months 'At The End of The Day' too should make you smile, another great example of the talented volunteers within the organisation, and what a superb photograph on the front cover taken by David Wallace on a recent trip to Greece. There is indeed no doubt that 'PLUS has got Talent.'

Party in the Park on the 16<sup>th</sup> May kicked off PLUS's season of public targeted campaigns. During the next few months we will raise awareness of mental health issues and promote anti stigma at several summer shows and events in P&K: many of our PLUS members have suffered the soul destroying effects of stigma- humiliation, exclusion and isolation. This is why there is a real commitment to go out and speak to people and try to change negative attitudes. The see me campaign have just released their action plan 2009-2011 and ask for local help in supporting their work and 'challenging stigma and discrimination whenever and where ever you come across it'. You can count us in for that one.

Why not come and visit us at the Volunteer Street Market in Perth City Centre on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June. We would love to see you then.

## PLUS Has Got Talent!

*Taken by David Wallace on the island Zante.*



## Summer Holidays

*Plus will be closed for summer holidays from 2.45pm on Wednesday 24th June until 8.30am on Monday 6th July.*

## Helplines

Breathing Space	0800 83 85 87
Depression Alliance Scotland	0845 123 23 20
Samaritans	08457 909090
Cruse Bereavement Care	0844 477 9400
Saneline	08457 678000
Eating Disorders Association	0845 6341414
Mental Health Out of Hours	08454242424
Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide	0844 561 6855

## PLUS

77 Canal Street, Perth PH2 8JJ Tel.: 01738 626242 Email: plusperth@msn.com

[www.plusperth.co.uk](http://www.plusperth.co.uk)

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# Mindspace A Personal Perspective

I first discovered Mindspace a few months ago. I was feeling so alone and lost due to some sad times in my life. I felt so unhappy. A good friend recommended them to me.

After an initial meeting it was decided I needed quite a lot of counselling sessions. At first they ask you to tell them what you think it is that is upsetting you. In between they will give you their thoughts and opinions about yourself. The sessions last about 50 minutes. I got a lovely lady counsellor. I went weekly for about two months.

I discovered things about myself that I'd been unable to face up to for years or I'd been hiding away unable to come to terms with. (Ghosts.) She taught me how to like myself and gave me my confidence back. All the ghosts from the past disappeared. Now I look forward to a rosy future with the feeling I'm going to do all the things I want to, yes, now!

**John Farquharson**

## Mindspace Counselling

**For adults, young people and groups living in P&K**

Mindspace Counselling Service is the counselling service for PAMH (Perth Association for Mental Health). It offers counselling to people who are facing a wide range of difficulties or challenges such as:

- **Bereavement or loss**
- **Isolation, anxiety or depression**
- **Stress of work or in the home**
- **Difficulties in family or intimate relations**

The service has an appointment system which aims to offer the initial appointment soon after you contact them. You would then have the opportunity to:

- **Discuss your concerns**
- **Hear about what counselling and psychotherapy could offer you**
- **Find out how the service works**
- **Talk over whether you think counselling or psychotherapy is for you**
- **Discuss suitable appointment times for you**

If both you and Mindspace consider that counselling would be helpful for you your name would be placed on the waiting list. Waiting times vary dependent on the service you are using. Contact Mindspace for more info.

Generally you are offered up to 20 sessions, although you can return for further sessions after a break of 6 months. The sessions last for 50 minutes and ideally you should be prepared to be available on the same day/time each week for the duration of the counselling. Sessions are held at the Mindspace premises in York Place.

Your initial appointment will be free of charge. Should you decide to opt in for counselling you will be invited to make a donation as a contribution towards the professional expenses of our volunteer counsellors. Mindspace encourage a contribution of between £5 - £25. We also have a Choice Service, with little or no waiting list, that costs £25 per session. **Telephone 01738 631639 or email [info@mindspacepk.com](mailto:info@mindspacepk.com)**

## Community Engagement:

**Improvement, Empowerment and Local Decision Making  
Tuesday 23rd June, Edinburgh.**

Following the publication of the Community Empowerment Action Plan by the Scottish Government and COSLA, this unique event will focus on the challenges and opportunities for community empowerment in Scotland.

**Young Scotland in Mind National Forum Event, 18 June 2009.**

Young Scotland in Mind will be holding their National Forum Event at the MacDonald Houston House, Uphall, from 9.30am to 4pm on Thursday 18 June 2009. The event's subtitle "Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland for Children and Young People" reflects the Scottish Government's newly published policy on mental health improvement 'Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland.'

**Contact the office 01738 626242.**

## Government Smoke-Free Responses

The Scottish Government website has published some of the responses to the recent consultation - "Achieving Smoke-free Mental Health Services in Scotland". Some of the comments include:-

**"Overall, I strongly favour an approach that concentrates on the mental wellbeing of mental health patients who are smokers, rather than on complying with legislation. We seem to have replaced encouragement with enforcement, and I am very unhappy with that approach."**

**"A complete ban is unnecessary on NHS grounds and I feel it is infringing on individuals rights. I understand that it might seem that a hospital or NHS facility ought to propound a complete ban on ethical grounds (if you like), yet it seems to me ridiculous that someone can't enjoy a quiet smoke in the open air."**

**"A buildings-only ban should be phased in too! I am aware that your research indicates that 'one-step' is more 'successful'; but that depends on focus: yours would seem to be about whether mental health patients smoke or not – mine would be about how people feel in moving towards smoking cessation. Individual mental wellbeing is more important."**

**"Propose funding for a smoking cessation mental health worker in units to support cessation and/or nicotine replacements on an individual and group basis. This should be open-ended, with review but without targets or deadlines. Measurability is not important – the aim should be to encourage and support individual cessation, and not simply to arrive at a smoke-free environment."**

**"I am concerned that the perceived aim concentrates on compliance rather than on the individuals concerned. Indeed, the wording of the documentation suggests to me a measure of discrimination in the attitude to patients. It seems very 'Us and Them'"**

Other response can be found at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/05/13144034/0>.

# NATIONAL NEWS

## Mind Book of the Year Award 2009

Mental health charity Mind recently announced this year's Mind Book of the Year Award for 'The Boy with the Topknot' by journalist Sathnam Sanghera: a memoir of love, secrets and lies in Wolverhampton. The memoir is about growing up in Wolverhampton and retrospectively discovering at the age of 24 that both his father and sister had schizophrenia.

Mind Book of the Year judges, Fay Weldon, Blake Morrison and Michele Roberts chose 'The Boy with the Topknot' over 110 entries as this year's greatest literary contribution to raising awareness around issues of mental distress.

## Government Takes Action for a 'Flourishing Scotland'

'Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland' which outlines the Government's plans for mental health improvement in Scotland was launched by the minister for public health, Shona Robinson on the 7th May. The action plan sets out the governments six priorities;

- **Mentally Healthy Infants**
- **Mentally Healthy Later Life**
- **Mentally Healthy Communities**
- **Mentally Healthy Employment and Working Life**
- **Reducing the Prevalence of Suicide an, Self-harm and Common Mental Health Problems**
- **Improving the Quality of Life of those experiencing Mental Health Problems and Mental Illness**

Third sector organisations such as PLUS are specifically mentioned as making "a significant contribution to the mental health improvement agenda both nationally and locally by advocating change and improvement for service users and the general population."

## TV Phone-in Scam Cash Funds Dementia Campaign

An advertising campaign about dementia in Scotland funded by money recovered from TV phone voting scandals went underway at the end of May. The month long campaign by Alzheimers Scotland features the faces of people who might be affected by the condition, with the message that "no one should go through dementia alone". Dementia affects around 63,500 people in Scotland. Alzheimers is the most common form of dementia. Alzheimer Scotland's Dementia helpline is 0808 808 3000.

## Depression Alliance Promotes Choice

Daring to Choose, 10 ways to improve choice for people with depression and anxiety was launched during depression awareness week. This new report gives ten recommendations for greater choice in depression and mental health services to help to trigger improvements for people affected by depression and anxiety, the report highlights the challenges faced by those people in getting their choice of treatment and services. Copies of the report available via PLUS or directly from [www.depressionalliance.org](http://www.depressionalliance.org)

## Words are Never Wasted - 21/10/09

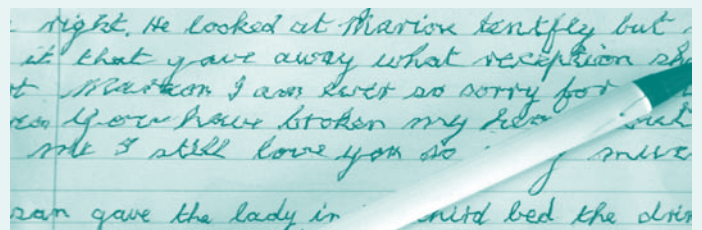
Words are 'Never Wasted' is a fascinating new drama to be shown on 21st October at 2.30pm in the Perth Concert Hall as part of the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival.

Five members of the Out of the Dark Writers Group will explore a range of genres and emotions including;

- **A surreal comedy about a paranoid woman in Dunfermline, convinced that there are Al Qaeda terrorist cells round every corner.**
- **A true life account of schizophrenia where the voices in your head are getting louder and louder.**
- **A family drama about a carer looking after his chronically depressed father.**
- **A lyrical story about an elderly woman and her relationship with her carer.**

Words are never Wasted is an afternoon of five new plays that throw light on one of society's last taboos - living with a mental health issue. Funny, surprising and very moving.

**The performance is a joint initiative between Plus Perth, Tricky Hat Productions and AttFife. To book a free place contact PLUS 01738 626242.**



## Suzy Johnston: The Snow Globe Journals

Suzy Johnston has penned a personal and open account of living with and recovering from episodes of mental illness. This carries on from her previous book, "The Naked Bird Watcher" published in Spring 2003, in which she discussed periods of serious mental ill health issues in relation to living her life and fulfilling her goals.

In the book, Suzy continues her journey through life and mental illness, challenging attitudes and perceptions.

**For further information on Suzy Johnston and her new book, please go to <http://www.thecairn.com/index.html>**

## Carer Support

Sarah Cox at Tayside Carers Support Project, based at Murray Royal Hospital, supports the Carers of those with a mental illness in Perthshire. In addition to her regular Support Groups, she is planning some Mental Health and Wellbeing Walks as well as some Information Sessions. The Information Sessions will be looking at Day Care, Psychiatric Medication, Coping Strategies and Psychological Therapies. Any Carers who would like to know more or to join us should contact: **Sarah Cox, on Perth 01738 562475, [sarah.cox3@nhs.net](mailto:sarah.cox3@nhs.net) or mobile 07920490534.**

# LOCAL NEWS

## Move Ahead Focuses on Views

Move Ahead, a local mental health service which promotes recovery for people with mental illness held a focus group on the 20th May looking at issues raised by its service users. An outcome report will be available in due course. For more info on the report or the service contact Pam Lamond on 01738 562403.

## Walled Garden Fete - 22/08/09

The Walled Garden, Murray Royal Hospital will hold its Annual Summer Fete on 22/08/09. There will be the usual BBQ, plant sales teas and home baking, bottle stall and musical entertainment on offer. Mark your diary for a great day out in the wonderfully therapeutic surroundings of the walled garden.

## Successful Funding Applications Workshop - 15/07/09

The Social Economy Partnership are holding a free successful funding application workshop on the 15th July. The event, which will take place in the Salutation Hotel, starts at 10.00am and runs until 4.00pm. Lunch will be included. To book your place on the workshop please register your interest by replying to Shelley Hague at Perth & Kinross Council. salhague@pkc.gov.uk or call 01738 477950.

## Perthshire Trusts Successful Funding Bid

Comrie Development Trust was recently named as one of three national organisations to benefit from the Scottish Investment Fund. The Trust supports sustainable development in the Perthshire village and will receive £200,000 from the SIF.

The investment will be used to develop a 90-acre ex-army site at Cultybraggan, purchased in 2007 for the benefit of the community. This will include development of 30 allotments, infrastructure works and the refurbishment of nine Nissan huts. In the longer term, CDT aims to create income-generating sports, leisure and recreation facilities, food production businesses and work spaces for local tradesmen.

## Surplus Land at Murray Royal Hospital

As part of the new MRH development a group is to be convened to look at possible uses of any 'surplus land' once the final bidder is announced at the end of June. The group will include various local groups such as the civic trust and the local community council. Service users will be represented by a volunteer from PLUS. Construction for the new hospital is scheduled to start in March - April 2010.

## Plus Parties in the Park

Trying out a new personalised gazebo PLUS joined in with other local voluntary organisations at PKAVS 'Party in the Park' on Saturday 16th May. Even with the poor weather conditions the day turned out to be a worthwhile and enjoyable experience.

## PAMH Launches New Programme of Activities

Perth Association for Mental Health launched their new programme earlier this month. PAMH offers Day Service groups providing support and opportunities for people in the community who experience mental health problems. People are allocated a Key Worker to provide individual support when necessary and to enable regular review of services being provided. For more info contact 01738 639657 or visit [www.pamh.co.uk](http://www.pamh.co.uk)

## PLUS members Meetings

The next PLUS members meeting will be on Tuesday 7th July in the Gateway, North Methven St, Perth from 1.30-3pm. These monthly meetings are open to all members and offer the opportunity to become more involved with the steering of the organisation.

# Stride for Life Walk Programme

Being active is good for your health - and making new friends! Walking has a great many benefits for your physical and mental wellbeing. Doing it with other people makes it easier and much more enjoyable. Perth and Kinross Leisure have been working with local communities to organise short health walks. Why not join us.

The Perth Stride for Life walking group meets every Tuesday at the Moncreiffe Church Hall, Glenbruar Crescent and would like to invite you to join them. Each week they go on a 'health walk' which is designed to cater for people of all ages and abilities. Whether it is a local route from the hall or a jaunt in the mini bus to see the scenery somewhere else, you will have the chance to enjoy a walk and chat in the company of others. All walks are led by trained health walk leaders for your peace of mind.

The group meet every Tuesday at 10.45 am at the hall. After the walk you can stay for a cuppa or some soup at the Church lunch club (very reasonably priced).

Stride for Life walks are also organised weekly in Crieff, Comrie and Aberfeldy. You are welcome to just turn up (wear comfortable clothing and footwear suitable for the weather) but if you would like to chat to someone before hand call the Physical Activity Team on 01738 492467.



Full programme details are also available at [www.liveactive.co.uk](http://www.liveactive.co.uk) or contact PLUS 01738 626242.

## AT THE END OF THE DAY

### I'm Normal Now

Sighs of relief from family and friends!

The days are steady,

I can paint and manage all the tasks.

Flowers are blooming in the garden slightly dull without their manic glow.

I checked my e-mails and updated Facebook watched Eastenders on the telly

While doing the ironing really fast.

I've lost my two companions M & D although they'll always be a part of me.

I'm totally polarized and balanced.

I'm not depressed, I'm not elated

Not even a little bit "excitable"

I'm walking the line

I'm one of the many.

Don't stand out in the crowd,

Everyone's proud.

They think I'm normal now.