



# Appaws for Autism



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[www.appawsforautism.org](http://www.appawsforautism.org)

Scottish Charity SC.046114

## APPAWS FOR AUTISM INFORMATION & SUPPORT SERVICE

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**Website:** [www.appawsforautism.org](http://www.appawsforautism.org)  
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### APPAWS NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2018

Well, according to the calendar spring has arrived. We have certainly had a proper winter this year so here's hoping a long, warm summer will be coming soon too. We are well settled into the scout hut now and have been running Family Fun Club most Saturday's since the new year.

We have been fortunate to benefit from two keen volunteers who have joined the team and I'm sure most of you will have met Nicole and Niamh by now. They are a great help and are especially welcome since our numbers have been increasing since Christmas. If anyone knows someone who might like to help out in any way and gain valuable experience working with children and adults on the autism spectrum, please let us know.

#### Annual General Meeting

This was held on Sunday 18/2/18. A copy of the minutes are available on request for Appaws Members .

#### Board Members

At the AGM, the new board was approved and is detailed below.

Linda Wilson is still managing director until 30/6/18 when Carol will resume this role. Carol is currently Secretary and Niel remains as Treasurer.

CAROL CHISHOLM	Founding Director. Autism Consultant. SECRETARY.
LINDA WILSON	Director of Advocacy and Children's Services. Managing Director and Temporary CHAIRPERSON.
NIEL CHISHOLM	Director of Finance, IT, Publicity. TREASURER.
LISA HARVEY	Director of Fundraising and Social Events.
MARCELLE MERRIGAN	Director of Administration. PA to C Chisholm.
JO GOWIE	Director of associated ASN Group Aberdeen.

We are all looking forward to continuing to work together to support the autism community within the Fife area and beyond and will endeavour to bring you the much needed services to help you in your journey with autism.

### VOLUNTEERS

We have opportunities for adults and young people with or without autism who may wish to gain some work experience or participate in a community group, with various roles available.

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

#### FAMILY FUN CLUB

This is a play session where children can take part in any of the activities available such as ARTS & CRAFTS, VIDEO GAMES, SENSORY SESSIONS, BOARD GAMES, ACTION FIGURES, LEGO, INDOOR & OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES. Our new Sensory Den, Therapy Balls and Scooter Boards have been proving very popular and we plan to start gardening activities soon.

Children can do as much or as little as they wish and there is a Sensory Area available for calm down time if it all gets too much. Activities will change every week and we are always willing to introduce new ones requested by centre users. Parents are required to stay with their child and are responsible for them throughout the session. The club is open to the whole family including siblings, mums, dads, grans and grandads or any other carer/guardian.

**Cost is £5.00 per family (2 adults and up to 3 children) (includes tea/coffee/juice/snack and activities).**

**This is payable on the day when you arrive and sign the Attendance Register.**

Adults can also come along to the club provided they are accompanied by a Carer. The cost of £5.00 also applies.

We hope to have other workshops and sessions for children and teenagers if there is a demand for them and we have more volunteers available to run them.

### **CHRISTMAS PARTY**

Our Christmas Party took place on SATURDAY 16<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2018 from 12noon-3pm. It was held in CROSSGATES COMMUNITY LEISURE CENTRE. This was free for members of APPAWS and £5 for non-members.

The party was very successful with a brilliant disco and lots of games. Santa's Elves set up a workshop where you could do various Christmas crafts and other fun games like tin can snowballs and flipping penguins. A fabulous buffet was organized by Mrs Claus and her assistants. There was also a visit to Santa's Grotto and a present for every child from Santa himself and a Christmas Raffle to finish off a fantastic day. Many thanks to everyone who participated and helped out.

We would use this venue again, as it was perfect for our needs. A well equipped kitchen and a clean and spacious hall easily accessible to all.

### **PUBLICITY DISPLAYS/MARKETING**

Our publicity team will be attending the following local events during 2018.

Dunfermline Fresh Air Festival in Public Park on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> May 12-4

Sense Scotland Gala at Lochore Meadows Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> July all day event

Gazebo has recently been redesigned to cover our service changes.

### **Website and Facebook Page**

We have a website and a Facebook Page which allows our members to access information and learn about what activities we are organising.

### **APPAWS ADVOCACY SERVICE**

We have provided support to a number of families over the past few months mostly regarding difficulties parents are having getting the correct support and placement for their child at school or support for families from health and social care services. Carol and Linda are our two advocacy workers who can help with a number of areas including:

Educational plans i.e. IEP, CSP, attend meetings with you, help with referrals and tribunals, Behaviour Support Plans. Assessments, DLA/PIP forms and support at tribunals. Help with applying for mobility car or blue badge scheme.

We can provide 1-1 home visits. First visit is free then should you require ongoing support either at home, with school or with healthcare then it is a yearly subscription of £60.

24/7 Support Service - Online/Face-to-Face/Text/Email.

## TRAINING & WORKSHOPS

Autism Awareness

Sensory Processing

Help your Child manage their Anxiety

Siblings and Autism

PECS making and Social Stories

Toilet Training

Picky Eaters

Sleep Problems

BE A TREE Dog Bite Prevention Workshop

16+ Workshops - Career, Employment, Life Skills

Teenage Talk sessions

## PROMOTING THE BENEFITS OF ANIMALS AS THERAPY FOR AUTISM

We were fortunate to have a recent visit to Family Fun Club by Em Halsey and her Assistance Dog Robin. Em is a young person with autism who trained her own dog to become an Autism Assistance Dog. The children, parents and volunteers all enjoyed chatting with Em about how she had experienced growing up with autism and learning how clever Robin was and how he could help Em. We also enjoyed learning a few useful tips which might come in handy for our own dogs. We hope to get Em back up for another visit later this year.

**APPAWS will continue to promote their own Therapy Dogs who can visit local organisations and/or individuals in their own home.**

Harley, who is our Ambassador, will be visiting Aberdeen Airport with Niel and Carol later this month. He is going to be helping passengers affected by autism during their visit to the airport and the staff will be learning how they can make the airport an autism friendly environment.

### **APPAWS AUTISM FRIENDLY AWARDS**

This is a criteria and nomination based award for services, retailers and local authorities who are Autism Friendly. It will be a PAWS system, similar to star ratings indicators. ie

3 PAWS            2 PAWS            1 PAW

Work will begin on developing these awards over the coming months.

### **FUNDRAISING & SOCIAL EVENTS**

We have been very fortunate over the past few months in securing funding from various organisations. This has helped us to purchase a variety of new sensory integration equipment for use at our Family Fun Club. We have also been able to get different sports and games equipment and to develop a small gardening area. IT equipment has also been purchased to help with our publicity and marketing and we will be organising a variety of activities and days out for our families over the coming months.

We are very grateful to all donations we receive that help us to provide our services to people affected by autism.

Lisa Harvey is leading a new Working Group comprised of parents who will be looking at different ways of raising funds locally. They will also be organising social events for our families and we will be reporting on their activities in future newsletters.