



# ARCH wise

NEWSLETTER NO.1 DECEMBER 2016

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## The new Autism Hub is open!

Well, we finally moved into permanent premises here in the South Lanarkshire ARCH centre, Burnbank, Hamilton on 22<sup>nd</sup> August! A lot's been happening; so forgive us for the detail in this first edition, but we want you to be 'in the know'....



## A bit about the Jean Brownlie Centre

The centre was previously used by South Lanarkshire Social Work Resources; Older Peoples Services. Almost everyone who's been here feels it is ideally set out. We want to create a welcoming and homely environment for everyone regardless of their age when they come to the centre; and we even recently had a 'deep clean' just to spruce the place up a bit. We hope you like it too. It's still called the Jean Brownlie Centre on the front sign – but we plan to get that changed in the near future to avoid confusion for our users. It's our intention to become one easily identified and recognizable 'hub' for all autism services and support groups within South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership area. Until now the Autism Community has not had a facility which had the capacity to host the full range of services and supports in the Statutory,

Voluntary and community led sectors.

## We Do Now!

ARCH intends to be a hub for universal, early intervention and targeted support services. We plan to host these services from our centrally located premises. We also want your help in identifying gaps in autism support provision throughout the partnership area. We will work with our autism partners; and other like minded individuals in all sectors to address these gaps creatively.

Whilst we will host a range of these services in the ARCH centre we will also continue to work with autism partners in all of the Locality areas to continue develop area based services which are responsive to local needs.

The Supports available in ARCH will apply to all individuals affected Autism across their lifespan, regardless of their age and stage. Groups are already offering support to parent carers, young adults and children. We have plans to do more, and we will do more; with your help.

This is our first 'ARCH WiSe' newsletter, and it will no doubt evolve along with the services hosted within ARCH. We hope you will see that our approach is strength based, and focused on building expertise and capacity within the autism community; creating lasting connections between users, parent carers and providers in all sectors for the benefit of everyone affected by Autism across their lifespan within South Lanarkshire.

## **How do I access ARCH?**

We are a universal autism partnership service, covering the whole of South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership area. You can phone us as a parent carer, a person affected by Autism or a professional or volunteer involved with a person affected by Autism. You can get us on 0344 225 1111. We can then signpost you on to relevant services and supports depending on your particular needs.

### The staff

We are all employed by or working in partnership with South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership and have different titles; but we're united in our intention to offer users and carers a supportive and nurturing environment where issues relating to autism can be addressed meaningfully and sensitively. We will emphasize our collaborative approach, working with and for people affected by Autism and their parent/carers.

When individual consultations are arranged, we will treat these in the strictest confidence unless explicit permission is given by users or parent carers to consult with other agencies on their behalf.

### Who Are We?

**Ramon Hutchingson – Team Leader (Children and Families Services)**

**Lorraine Taylor – Community Living Manager (Adult Services)**

**Heather Forsyth – Resource Worker (Adult Services)**

**Margo Mooney – Early Years Home Link Worker (A.S.D.)**

**Carol King – Social Worker with A.S.D. specialism (Children and Families Services)**

**Dian McFadden – Carer Support Worker; Lanarkshire Carers Centre and Sleep Scotland Advisor**

## **What we've done since moving to the ARCH centre on 22<sup>nd</sup> August**

The lending library – we've purchased a range of relevant and informative books relating to Autism across the lifespan, including sibling support.

These books are now available for loan to parent carers and individuals affected by Autism as a way to gain further insight into the condition.

The books will be loaned out for 2 weeks, and can be renewed for a further 2 weeks if needed.

Parent Carer Support Group –The Parent Carer Support Group has been running since June 2016 and takes place on a Monday. It's facilitated by one autism experienced worker and a carer support worker from Lanarkshire Carers Centre. We will also be running an evening Parents Support Group on the last Tuesday of each month commencing 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016 7-8.30pm.

A number of presentations and workshops have been presented to the group, and we plan to make sure these continue to take place on a rolling programme for all centre users. The group and presentations are open to everyone using the centre, as well as new parent carers from anywhere in the partnership area.

### Holistic Therapies.

Our partners in the Lanarkshire Carers Centre will be offering the services of their Holistic Therapists. This will mean ARCH centre Users can book appointments through LCC with this therapist for relaxation therapies such as Reiki, Massage and Aromatherapy.

### 'Sleep Scotland' follow up surgeries – accredited Sleep Scotland advisors

Two accredited Sleep Scotland Advisors are holding follow up sessions with parent carers who have received sleep related advice and strategies. This is a chance to see how advice has been applied and how successful the methods given have been.

### Autism Alert Cards

The use and availability of Autism Alert Cards for those affected by Autism has been widely acknowledged throughout the UK as highly beneficial, especially when people affected by Autism are being dealt with by services such as Police Scotland or the Ambulance Service. The cards can act as a very good way to quickly communicate to these services specific challenges faced by those with Autism; such as being touched or interviewed.

With the support of Autism Network Scotland, we're developing our own ARCH Autism Alert Cards and plan to have these produced in the near future

## Links with our Autism partners in the Statutory, Voluntary and Community led sectors

- [Money Matters](#) – we hosted a really informative presentation by Patricia Fairfield; Welfare Rights Officer about entitlement to benefits related to Autism and Parent Carers.
- [Govan Law Centre](#) – Donna Morgan (solicitor) with the Law Centre made an informative presentation on Additional Support for Learning legislation, as well as general disability rights to the Parent Carer Support group. This resulted in several referrals to the Law Centre being processed by Donna. We hope to invite Donna back in a few months.
- [Scottish Autism](#) – Catriona Stewart from Scottish Autism made a presentation on S.A.'s 'Right Click' online support service, as well as The Scottish Women's Autism Network (SWAN) on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2016.
- [Psychological Services](#) – Shirley Paterson who is Depute Principle Psychologist in South Lanarkshire's Psychological Services is coming to make a presentation on the role of the Educational Psychologist in supporting children and young people with Autism within the education setting, and discuss the roll out of the 'Autistic Lens' for education staff.
- [Vaslan](#) – Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire are our commissioned service engaged with the voluntary sector in the Authority, and Ann Sangster from the service made a presentation to the parent carer group about the importance of GIRFEC for children and young people affected by Autism. Ann will be invited to come back on a regular basis.
- [NHSL Dietician Service](#) – Gemma McGowan talked to the parent carer group about the Dietetic Service and how this can offer support when an individual affected by Autism has dietary issues.
- [Jordans Eye Care](#) – Ian Jordan is recognized as a leading authority on issues relating to the visual processing and sensory integration issues faced by many people with ASD. He has made a presentation to the East Kilbride/Strathaven parent support group, and has agreed to come to ARCH in January 2017 to outline his work run from his practice in Ayrshire.
- [Ewan Culling ,Clinical Psychologist, NHSL](#) – is scheduled to make a presentation on the role of the clinical psychology service for adults affected by Autism.
- [Speak Out Advocacy Service](#) – Tricia Kearns and the team have visited the centre and we are planning to offer an advocacy surgery in the centre, for Adults affected by Autism.
- [Action For Children - Silverton Outreach Respite Group](#) – Since 29<sup>th</sup> October 2016 the Silverton respite group has run in the centre on a Saturday and Sunday. This will continue for the foreseeable future. We welcome the service for those children affected by Autism and co-existing disabilities to the centre.

## **A word from Autism Partners currently using the centre, or planning to in the near future**

### COAST

Welcome to COAST (Carers Of Autism Spectrum Together)

Our Parent Carer Support group runs every Tuesday from 10am-2pm. Drop in for a coffee, chat, peer support from parents who know and understand how you feel. Don't worry if you have a 'pre-schooler' bring them too and they can play, draw or watch a cartoon.

We are very fortunate to be part of the integration of autism within South Lanarkshire where we can find out all the up to date information available to parent/carers of children and young adults with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

We also welcome parents who are about to start, or have already begun the journey through the ASD diagnostic pathway with their child.

Do you need help filling in forms or feel anxious about attending meetings on your own? One of our parents would gladly accompany you for peer support.

We also fundraise for activities during school holidays and already have activities and trips organised. We find these activities help reduce the isolation felt by so many families at these times.

Having access to the ARCH centre is a fantastic opportunity for all local groups to learn and share information on Autism; whether you're a parent/carer, a child or young adult with autism or a family friend. It's a place to laugh and socialise and most importantly gives the autism community a permanent base that doesn't change allowing the children and adults to relax knowing it's there and what to expect. This is something which has never been previously accessible before in South Lanarkshire.

Carol Ann Fallone (Chairperson)

### **NHS Lanarkshire Occupational Therapy Children and Young People Team**

We currently offer a variety of services to children with ASD in the wider community. Within the ARCH Centre we hope to offer information sessions, drop in clinics and workshops in conjunction with South Lanarkshire Social Work.

Suzanne Shields; Paediatric Occupational Therapy Team Leader

## **SAIL (Supporting Autism In Lanarkshire)**

The opening of South Lanarkshire councils ARCH centre could not have come at a better time for SAIL. Having just been awarded our charitable status we were looking for a suitable venue from which to launch our new projects.

The first of these projects being a Young adult's social group to address the severe shortage of resources for this age group. Facilities at the new autism resource base in Reid Street are ideal for this purpose. We meet every Wednesday evening between 7 and 9 pm to provide much needed social opportunities for young adults with autism, aged between 18 and 30, as well as providing support for their parents and carers.

Having the use of the facilities within the former Jean Brownie building has allowed us a great deal of scope to tailor our activities to what our young adults wish to do, it also allows for quiet space and a meeting point for parents/carers. Many of our young adults have very limited social opportunities with some having never even met others their own age with autism. The group is in its early days but already the young adults are engaging very well with the activities and are involved with the planning and choosing of these each week. So far we have had movie nights, games nights, easy meals cooking and a Halloween themed night with several of our members dressing up and getting into the spirit of the evening.

Our parents are finding it a useful opportunity to gain information and chat to other parents facing the same challenges they do every day. We are finding members are travelling from all over south Lanarkshire to attend our group.

Our next step is to expand the age group of the projects to create a similar teen group for our younger members. We have lots a great idea and plans that would only be possible with the use of such a great space as the ARCH building. We are delighted to be working in partnership with South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership on this fantastic project and have high hopes that it will continue to grow and develop into a vital resource for people living with autism in South Lanarkshire.

*Ross Macfadyen and Linda Morrow. Tel: 07922 399 199*

### **Lanarkshire Carers Centre**

The Lanarkshire Carers Centre is very happy to be collaborating with the ARCH Autism Hub, and continue to facilitate the ARCH parent carer groups along with hub staff.

We offer a wide range of support services for carers, a small selection of which includes;

Creative breaks – short breaks for carers of those aged over 21,

'Caretalk' – our telephone support service,

'Pampering' therapies such as Reiki and massage and ,

Carer support groups.

If ,as a parent carer you would like to access any of these services, or find out more about what we have on offer please contact us on 01698 428090/ 01236 755550 or email us at: [info@prtcc.org.uk](mailto:info@prtcc.org.uk)

## H AFC Community Outreach

H AFC considers its community project work paramount and of equal value to the many accolades and celebratory wins. As far back as 1874 when first established by local school Hamilton Grammar, the sport and spirit of the community has been intertwined and over the past 10 years under leadership of CEO Colin McGowan and more notably in the past season it can be said that the club's spirit is alive and well in the community.

Upon learning of the closure of the Lanarkshire OSS the attention of the Trust was quickly drawn to how we would be able to support families and children affected by the closure of this vital support service and worked with SLC to offer a six week piloted summer programme for the children, and provided a safe and supportive environment for parents to access support and for staff to feel welcome and part of our Club.

We are delighted to have been able to help at such a critical time experienced within the Lanarkshire Autism community and look forward to building upon our already well established relationship with ARCH for the benefit of all throughout the community.

As part of our outreach services we offer the following weekly activities:

Monday	Lego Therapy £4	6-7pm
Tuesday	Drama Club £5	5.30-6.30 & 6.45pm
Wednesday	Chess Club £2.50 Craft & Knitting Club (Girls Only) £6	6-7.30pm 6.30 – 7.30 pm
Thursday	Parent & Carer Support Group	9.30 – 11.30 am
Friday	H AFC ASN Football	4-5 pm & 5pm-6pm

Our doors remain open even when the turnstiles close...

Please call, email or join our social media networks for further information and to be kept up to date with all of our activities and events.

*Catriona McRoberts:*

*Assistant to Head of Youth & Community Trust Manager*

Tel: 01698 368650

Mobile: 07957 876019

## Action for Children Silverton Short Breaks-

Silverton welcome the new ARCH centre as a much needed and welcome addition to the range of autism services available across South Lanarkshire.

The hub will provide a focal point for our weekend respite groups on a Saturday and Sunday, with children who are affected by complex conditions which exist alongside their autism.

Our staff are also planning further groups to be hosted in the centre after school hours.

*Dawn Winters -  
Registered Manager  
Action for Children  
Silverton Short Breaks*

**Sportworx Community Enterprise –**

“I have been delighted to support the fantastic work provided by the Arch Team. Sportworx got involved over the summer and again during the October week. This partnership is continuing to grow and we strive to put in place a provision that is inclusive, professional and appropriate to the needs of the families.”

*David Brown; Youthworx Team Leader*

**Clydesdale Integrated Children’s Services Team**

“An enjoyable part of my role is to facilitate parent/carers’ support groups in Clydesdale/Larkhall locality.

For a limited period over the summer this year I was invited to extend this to the whole of SLC area through the ARCH provision based in Hamilton. This afforded me the opportunity to meet a wider group of families living with autism at two support group sessions a week and understand, empathise and provide a listening ear to their fears, confusion and concerns.

The group agreed collectively to have a forum with a positive approach where participants were able to feel less isolated by offering each other peer support. Participants were encouraged to discuss particular topics of relevance raised by individuals, explore immediate and practical strategies for specific problems, and vent their feelings without feeling judged.

We built relationships, formed trust, shared experiences and learned loads with lots of tears, laughs and cake!

Although I no longer have input with the support groups in Hamilton I am pleased to have continued involvement with some of the parents in other forums and look forward to contributing as relevant to the ARCH as it develops.”

*Marjory Donoghue; Early Years Home Link Worker*

## **Money Matters South Lanarkshire -**

### **Benefits of service**

- Money Matters Advice Service South Lanarkshire can assist with debt, welfare benefit and tax credit advice. The service is free and confidential
- Based on your circumstances we can tell you what benefits or tax credits you may be entitled to and will help you to make claims and challenge decisions.
- We can help you with debt worries such as rent or mortgage arrears, fuel debts; credit card payments bank charges, payday loans, etc.

### **Service provision details**

- Many people – for example those with as ill health, carers, working part time or on low wage, unemployed, pensioners – may be entitled to benefits they are not claiming. And we will also help you if you are worried about debt
- We will ask you about your household's circumstances and tell you which benefits and tax credits you could be entitled to and we will help you to complete forms you may have difficulty with. If your claim is refused or your benefit stops we will help you challenge those decisions, including helping you to get additional evidence to support your claim and if you ultimately have to appeal the decision we will represent you at your appeal.
- If you have debts, we will ask you about your financial circumstances including the income you have coming into the house, any assets you have, regular bills and your debts. We will help you look at your overall debts situation and will tell you what options are available to you to deal with this so that you can decide on the best option for you and will guide you through this all the way.

### **Money Matters Referral process**

- You can access the service by telephoning 0303 123 1008 to speak to an advisor or to make an appointment or by coming into your local Q & A office.

*Patricia Fairfield; Welfare Rights Officer*

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## **ARCH Autism Advisor**

I have been involved with the new initiative ARCH from South Lanarkshire Council since the summer of 2016. We have moved around a few venues since this time; however it is great to now have a designated centre to which parents can have ownership and feel comfortable when accessing.

My initial involvement has been to support the set up and facilitation of the Parent Support Group which has grown and developed over this time in supporting parents to work through the daily challenges they face caring for a child, young person or adult who has Autism.

We have also been able to support those who are at the start of this journey with their cared for person. Since moving into the Jean Brownlie Centre I have worked closely with the other staff members, as well as The Lanarkshire Carers Centre in developing timely and appropriate supports for the families who access the group.

I think the hub is a much needed and welcomed support for those affected by autism in South Lanarkshire, and will continue to develop in achieving better outcomes for these families.

In my current position within the ARCH project, I am located in the centre two days per week with a focus on support and development within the centre. I am also in a position to offer appointment time for individual consultations where families are able to meet with me in private to discuss specific challenges they are facing. I can provide practical support strategies to assist these issues.

I have also been able to respond to identified need via the parent carer group, and now provide 10 families with the opportunity to take part in an Early Bird Plus programme. The programme aims to provide parent carers with an understanding and knowledge of Autism, and provide them with strategies both to pre-empt problem behaviors and manage those which do occur. This group improves communication with their child, and provides peer support.

It is a great opportunity and privilege to be part of the new hub service and engage with existing and new families managing Autism.

*Margo Mooney Early Years Home Link Worker - ASN remit (Autism specialism)  
Integrating Children's Services, East Kilbride and Strathaven*

### **Other planned Support Services –**

Early Bird ,Early Bird + and early bird healthy minds – are courses run by accredited practitioners looking to inform and educate parent carers of children affected by Autism. These programmes are widely recognized as effective ways of building capacity for parent carers; reducing the need for further targeted services.

Pediatric Occupational Therapy Service - Parent Carers support programme - The Pediatric O.T team will be delivering some of their intervention groups from the centre in November.

COVEY Befriending Service - have expressed an interest in designing a support group for families affected by ASC. Rhoda Reid from the service will be meeting with staff to discuss areas of identified need in the authority, and how COVEY could assist in addressing some of these.

Speak Out Advocacy – to hold a monthly surgery for any adults with Autism who want to access an advocacy and advice service for matters such as; Self Directed Support, housing or employment.

### **School holidays –**

We've negotiated additional provision over the summer, Easter and October school holidays to ensure that our parent carers can still come along to the support group and have their children involved in structured activity sessions. This will be hosted by Sportsworx and Hamilton Accies Football Team, Community Outreach Service.

### **Reaching out to our Autism Partners –**

We've been in touch with over 25 of our autism partners throughout the partnership area during October 2016 and asked them if they would answer a small questionnaire to help us identify current provision and areas where the groups viewed there to be areas of unmet need. This will help us inform our collaboration with these autism partners in the coming months.

### **Our Mailing List –**

If you are not already on our ARCH mailing list please let us know and we'll ensure you get put on it. This will ensure you will receive notification about forthcoming events, services, workshops, presentations or training events.

### **A Centre Users Steering Group**

We're planning to organize a centre user steering group in order to coordinate the range of community led provision being hosted in the centre and avoid unnecessary duplication of services or waste of limited resources. Involvement and participation by our users will be the most important aspect of the Steering group and we will seek nominations from centre user groups to represent their own members' views.

The Centre Users Steering group will also feedback and receive information from the Autism Strategy Group.

### **Do you have any suggestions?**

What would you like to see in the next newsletter?

Are there any relevant or helpful autism specific links for services you've found which we could let others know about?

**Let Us know.**

Contact Details:

ARCH, Jean Brownlie Centre, Reid Street, Burnbank, Hamilton ML3 0RQ

Helpline: 0344 225 1111 (open 9-4 Mon – Fri)