



# ANNUAL REVIEW

APRIL '18 TO MARCH '19

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# CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

**There is no doubt that our 7th Year has been one of huge achievement.**

Over the last few years there have been huge efforts by far too many individuals to mention, to make our **Community Asset Transfer (CAT)** from Aberdeenshire for the Old Schoolhouse a reality. When it concludes (expected May 2019) this will be the largest CAT to date within Aberdeenshire!

Once our 175 year lease for nominal annual rent is in place the charity will have a stable, long-term foundation to house the invaluable services for families living with complex conditions. The CAT is a magnificent step forward for us and provides an ideal platform from which to push forward and flourish. We would like to thank **Aberdeenshire Council**, the **local Councillors**, the **local community**, and our **Trustees** - past and present - for their hard work and support resulting in this wonderful opportunity. The conclusion of the CAT is also testament to the unwavering drive and vision of our co-founders, **Suz Strachan** and **Susan Kay** to provide a centre of excellence for people with multiple support needs.

I continue to be in awe of the efforts of staff and volunteers without whom it would be impossible to provide the recognised, first rate service for which the SensationALL name has become synonymous. The increase in registered individuals and substantial growth in services with the number of sessions increasing considerably year on year is clear evidence of this. This is only possible thanks to the dedication and hard work of the staff and volunteers. All in all, the commitment shown is truly remarkable.

Looking ahead, our next major project is to extend the car park and improve the entrance to the Old Schoolhouse, ensuring safe access for all. In our commitment to the community this project will incorporate an upgrade of the next door play facility which is open to the public. In order to achieve these goals it is paramount that we continue to secure funding and corporate support which is a continuous challenge.

So in conclusion, we are in a positive position but ongoing effort and endeavour will be required to continue to develop and deliver our flagship facility.'

**BOB MCCRACKEN**  
CHAIRMAN



# A SENSATIONALL MISSION

It is our mission to provide **therapy-based** services and activities for children and adults living with **any disability** or **support need**.

ALL  
AGES

ALL  
CONDITIONS

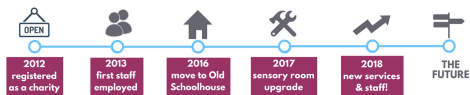
ALL  
FAMILY  
MEMBERS

We **empower** families to address the challenges that complex conditions present by equipping them with practical techniques, knowledge and advice. Our centre offers a safe place to access specialist facilities and support, **a place where they belong** and can be themselves.



Life skills session

## THE JOURNEY SO FAR



# SUPPORTING CHILDREN



Relaxing in the sensory room

## Malcolm's story

10 year old Malcolm has Autism and as a result has limited communication, his family have been regularly attending SensationALL for a number of years to get support. Malcolm's parents have struggled to access suitable activities where they could drop him off and where his sister would be welcomed as a sibling.

SensationALL's Inclusive Social Group provides much needed respite for his parent's whilst Malcolm and his sister socialise and interact with other children.

Malcolm's limited communication is not an issue as staff use picture symbols and visual aids so he can express his likes/dislikes and choices. Malcolm's progress has been significant with his confidence growing and he has gradually begun using more complex language.

Malcolm's mum & dad have noticed improvements in the way he interacts with others, his ability to take turns and his speech. He is also better at playing games and structured activities.

We are committed to offering early intervention for young children. It is our aim to help families with concerns about their child's learning, motor skills, sensory processing, behaviour, communication or general development.

As we know how confusing, stressful and often lengthy the diagnostic process can be our services are designed to support families struggling to access appropriate help and advice.

**A formal diagnosis is not required to access SensationALL's services**



Malcolm enjoying bowling

*"My son & daughter have benefited enormously from attending SensationALL. The staff are amazing with Malcolm and the best part is he feels included."*

Malcolm's dad

# 70%

of our service users are under 16 years old



# SUPPORTING TEENAGERS



Teen SociALLise with visitors from Dekko Comics

Our services for teenagers (promoting social skills and self esteem whilst providing community experiences) have gone from strength to strength this year.

**Teen SociALLise** had an exceptional year with themed sessions, a BBQ, several outings in addition to all the usual activities. We even held joint sessions with the local Dyslexia branch bringing in specialist speakers (as in above photo).

The self development and increased confidence of the teenagers is evident to see and the skills they learn will improve their resilience and tolerance, equipping them for the wider world around them.

**50%**  
of service users  
have Autism

## Craig's Story

Craig has ADHD and Autism and started attending our Teen SociALLise group when he was 16. Craig had good communication skills however, he tended to withdraw from conversation and rarely initiated contact with staff or peers as he found social situations difficult. His way of coping with social anxiety was to be energetic and loud which at school often led to him being the butt of other's jokes. He also didn't like to share information about himself and struggled to make meaningful friendships.

After attending SociALLise for a while, Craig's tendency towards impulsive behaviour settled down and with the support of staff he became more integrated in activities and even started to share experiences in group discussions. This led to a very productive session on the topic of bullying when the group offered a lot of peer support and respect to each other with Craig making significant contributions.

Over time Craig's confidence and self-esteem have developed and he is now forthcoming in talking about and demonstrating his interests (such as martial arts and card tricks!) which highlights great self development and maturity. He even felt ready to challenge himself by volunteering at some of our groups for younger children and staff have praised his enthusiasm and positive outlook.

Craig now attends a full time, supported course at NESCOL and has even got a part time job in a local shop. He continues to attend SociALLise because as his mum says *"the group is so valuable"* to him.

The future looks bright for Craig!

*"Craig has always been a bit lost in life. He has come on so well in the last year, showing more responsibility at home and he loves volunteering. We're really proud of him and grateful for the fantastic work the staff have put in with him."*

Craig's mum



Craig showing the group his martial arts

# SUPPORTING ADULTS



Monday Mayhem was one of our foundational services and with it's successful format of baking/snack making, crafts and music providing great social opportunities for adults with support needs and disabilities it continues to be a staple in our timetable.

Our adult services are continually developing as it is important to us that we adapt to the evolving needs of our beneficiaries.

We are committed to ensuring life-long support for those who need it most and for many of our older attendees their visit to SensationALL is the highlight of their week!

"Gabrielle's face always lights up when the staff welcome her. She likes watching all the 'goings on' in the group and loves being involved in activities, especially when she gets to operate the specially adapted food mixer. It's fantastic to see that someone with limited speech and physical ability can be included and get so much enjoyment from our sessions."

Suz Strachan, Service Manager

# 45%

of our services  
are for adults

**Sensory Stories** have become a key part of our Midweek Mayhem sessions in 2018-19 as we re-developed this group to better suit the needs of the adults with more profound needs and limited physical ability levels.

We use a variety of materials to give the individuals different experiences of touch, sight, sound and taste. Our creative team use a theme or story to incorporate the materials into, taking the attendees on a journey through their senses.



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE



The last year has been busy for SensationALL with developments in services, our staff and the building. Here are some of our key achievements that have made a positive difference:



## SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

We pride ourselves on being needs led, taking a flexible, responsive approach to our service users. This year we have increased the frequency of children's social groups (for primary ages & teenagers), carried out more 'Tea & Tips' advice consultations, introduce new holiday sessions (listening walk, drumming, music therapy, fairy door making, siblings sessions and puppet shows!). All of which means we have helped more people than ever before.



## BUILDING WORK

The community asset transfer with Aberdeenshire Council for the Old Schoolhouse is due to complete in 2019, which will give us the freedom to fully re-develop the building. But in the meantime, we need to undertake essential maintenance.

Thanks to **CATS ML** the main activity room got a new floor and storage units and following a grant from **Cash for Kids** we were able to upgrade the soft play room with new flooring, matting and a bigger ball pool.



## TRAINING DELIVERY

This year we have provided training workshops on topics such as Sensory Differences and Autism Awareness to a wide range of organisations and groups including

- Riding for the Disabled, - Aberlour,
- Great Western Preschool, - Carronhill School
- pupils at Westhill Academy.

In addition to our family First Aid training session.



## PARTNERSHIPS

This year we have been proud to work with:

- Dyslexia Scotland, North East Branch
- Down's Syndrome support group
- Supporting Children In Learning for Life (SCILL)
- Schools Out! Club Westhill (our sister company)

It was also a huge achievement to become a provider of Flexible Learning Pathways for Aberdeenshire Council and the successful deliver specialist, tailored groups to local school children with support needs who are struggling to cope with mainstream schooling. Due to the varied needs of the group a responsive therapy-based approach has been crucial to ensure each pupil benefits from the sessions. Our staff have demonstrated patience, understanding and have been accommodating with challenging behaviour and we are delighted with the positive results.



**over  
a third**

of referrals are from NHS, social work or education professionals

# OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

## 2,837

Participations  
across all services

## 468

Sessions -  
up 54% on  
last year

## 274

Registered  
individuals.  
106 new this year



### INCOME

Unrestricted funds	£ 99,752
Restricted funds	£ 92,988
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£192,740</b>



### EXPENDITURE

Charitable activities	£166,091
Governance	£ 2,640
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£168,731</b>



### BALANCE SHEET

Current Assets	£129,642
Fixed Assets	£ 34,213
Current Liabilities	£ 12,121
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>£151,734</b>



Baking in Monday Mayhem

## FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Our SensationALL fundraising events have been a huge success this year raising almost £25,000 largely because of **Run Balmoral**, **Tipsy Tea Party (A Royal Wedding?)**, **Ride the North** and a **St Andrew's Ceilidh**. Thanks to all the fundraisers who took part in raising money and to all the volunteers who make these events possible.

SensationALL is a key part of the local Westhill community so we were proud to be the partner charity of the **Westhill 10k** as well as having a presence at the annual **Gala Day**.

We also held a **summer open day** and **Christmas Fayre & Santa's Grotto** at the Old Schoolhouse for the public, local residents and our beneficiaries.

## 1800

Volunteering  
hours



# SENSATIONALL SUPPORTERS



Doubletree by Hilton



Subsea 7

We would like to express our sincere thanks to all the organisations who supported us with donations in the last year, including:

- Fulcrum
- Fairhurst
- CATS ML
- TAQA Bratani Ltd
- Apache North Sea
- Doubletree by Hilton
- APS Financial Ltd
- Architectural Doors & Windows
- Aberdeen International Airport
- Deeside Golf Club Ladies
- Seven Incorporated Trades Widows Fund
- Tesco
- Fairfield Energy
- Archer Knight
- Converged Communications Solutions

Not to mention all the amazing groups who came to help us to paint, decorate, garden and clean our centre:

- Conoco Phillips
- M&S Westhill
- Subsea 7
- Westhill Lions
- CATS ML

This year we have been grateful for financial support from:



CATs ML C&S day



Westhill Lions painting soft play room



Soft play room after refurbishment



## WHAT NEXT...

**Time flies when you're having fun and definitely when you're busy!**

*"SensationALL is a family within our family".* A parent

I struggle to remember life before SensationALL, yet 7 years also feels like the blink of an eye! We have to remember to take time to reflect on what we have achieved in this relatively short time. There have been challenges, but we relish the opportunity to adapt what we do to remain relevant and effective for our families.

This year has perhaps been our biggest period of change, requiring us to creatively adapt to our user's needs and evolve services whilst maintaining high levels of specialist support. The statistics speak for themselves with increases in the number of sessions and service users but our biggest achievement has to be the positive impact we have on our families. Its humbling to hear parents talk about a weight being lifted from their shoulders and confidence levels being boosted. It's knowing that a 73 year old woman with a learning disability will endure a round trip of 80 miles to attend a group. Its watching a youngster who struggles to 'fit in' or cope with school, excel and blossom thanks to our support. Its hearing a reluctant child say *"I can't wait to come back!"*.

I also continue to be amazed by the motivation and creativity of our team, who show no end of empathy and integral professional standards towards beneficiaries. They are what makes our charity truly 'sensationALL'.

But there is so much more we want to do!

Due to a lack of sustainable long-term funding we are currently operating at capacity. Our plans for 2019-20 include, expanding our staff resource & training, developing the service provision to fill gaps in the lifelong support we are strive for. We also plan to create a parent forum to not only assist us with consultations but to facilitate a platform for peer support and networking opportunities for those in similar situations.

There are exciting times ahead for SensationALL!

**Suz Strachan**  
**Service Manager & Co-founder**







2018-19 has been a driven and eventful year and it is with confidence I can say that we are a charity committed to leading a progressive and transformative agenda of inclusion, dedicated to those in need and our local community.

As we begin the next phase of developing the Old Schoolhouse into a centre of excellence, 2019-20 will mark the completion of our Community Asset Transfer and our plans for expanding our car park and upgrading the adjoining play park can begin. The Old Schoolhouse is a truly organic building, continually developing and improving throughout its lifetime, providing a place to belong for our unique individuals, and a stable base for the charity for the next 175 years...at least!

**Katie McNutt, Charity Manager**

## WITH THANKS TO OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

<b>Bob McCracken</b>	Chair
<b>Susan Kay</b>	Co-founder
<b>Jim Bain</b>	Treasurer
<b>Aileen Reid</b>	
<b>Theresa Roper</b>	
<b>Valery Burnett</b>	
<b>Catherine Dalgarno</b>	
<b>Stuart Bews</b>	
<b>Tom Pates</b>	Treasurer
<b>Clare Livingston</b>	







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