



# DOCHAS FOCUS

## SPRING 2021



Dochas Carer Centre, 50 Campbell St. Lochgilphead PA31 8JU

Hello to all our lovely carers.

Spring is on the horizon, bringing with it the prospect of new life, some warmer days, and the glint of hope that we will eventually return to something resembling 'normal' in our daily lives.

By now, some of you and those for whom you care will have received a first dose of the COVID 19 vaccine. We trust that the protection offered has allayed some fears, and though it may take a few months before everyone in the country gets the 'jag', and restrictions are eased, hold on to the thought that better times are coming! We miss seeing you, but are always thinking of you.



### SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE

Our Chair and co-founder of Dochas, Catherine Paterson, has had her unstinting work for Carers in Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Isles recognised, by being awarded an MBE in the New Year's Honours List. We are all delighted for Catherine, and look forward to celebrating with her later in the year when she is presented with her medal. We are so proud of all you have achieved Catherine!

### THANK YOU

Our thanks go to Robert Docherty of RJD Brickwork, Lochgilphead who organised a raffle for the Dochas Centre in December and raised an amazing £650.

Thanks also to the Bank of Scotland Reach Fund for £15,000 awarded to support the counselling service provided by Dochas.

Every donation received, helps to provide support to our carers in Mid Argyll, Kintyre, Isla, Jura and Gigha.

### COVID 19 – VACCINATION ROLL OUT

The Scottish government has prioritised vaccinations as follows:

1. Residents in a care home for older adults and their carers
2. All those 80 years of age and over and frontline health and social care workers
3. All those 75 years of age and over
4. All those 70 years of age and over and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals
5. All those 65 years of age and over
6. All individuals aged 16 years to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality
7. All those 60 years of age and over
8. All those 55 years of age and over
9. All those 50 years of age and over

Unpaid carers aged 16-64 are to be included in group 6. If carers are over 64 they will have been included in earlier groups.

### PERSONAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT

(disposable masks, gloves, aprons)

Carers in Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Isles who engage in personal care may request PPE from the Dochas Centre. Please contact the support worker in your relevant area as follows:

Mid Argyll –  
07464 308 418

Kintyre –  
07535 036 953

Islay & Jura –  
07912 015 393



Wilma Dettmer, long-time carer and friend of Dochas sadly passed away on 1<sup>st</sup> January this year. Wilma is pictured here with her two sons James and Iain. The Dochas Centre was very grateful to receive a gift of £1003 from donations made in Wilma's memory.

A lovely lady, who is very much missed.

### DONATIONS TO DOCHAS

Should you wish to support the Dochas Carers Centre by making a financial gift, you can post a cheque or donate by bank transfer to **Dochas Fund** Bank of Scotland **Sort Code: 80 08 86** **Account Number: 00131786**

## A Carer's Experience

My son Hubert was born in 2013. At the age of 3 he was diagnosed with autism. At the age of 6 he was diagnosed with ADHD. He is nonverbal and has sensory processing disorder. He will be 8 soon and he has never said a word. He can communicate by different sounds and gestures. We are also using visuals like pictures and photos to help him to communicate. Hubert doesn't understand any social boundaries. He will come up to people to give them a hug or sit on their knees without asking for permission and that is a big challenge now when we are all told to keep our distance. He is constantly on the move. He doesn't sit to do anything. His energy levels are very high all day long. Even when he wakes up at 3 in the morning, he is up and running all day. Hubert can get upset very easily by a sound or something that he saw. His meltdowns can take well over an hour and involve shouting, biting himself, pulling his hair and sometimes being aggressive towards other people (like me trying to calm him down) or objects. Hubert has no sense of danger like traffic or water. He needs to be supervised 24/7. At school he has two teachers working with him during the day.

But it is not all bad things. He is very honest with his feelings. He has no filter. He either likes something or not. He loves cuddles and being tickled and his laugh is the best sound in the world. He teaches me every day how to be patient and communicate with him without him talking even though he can understand what I am saying to him. He is very clever and knows exactly how to do things and how to get what he wants.

### WE NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU

In this and future newsletters, we are aiming to highlight some of the caring roles experienced by a selection of our carers. This may give us all a different perspective and greater insight. It would be wonderful to hear from you about some of the things you experience and the emotions you go through in your caring role. What do you wish other people would understand? Please email [tricia@dochasfund.org.uk](mailto:tricia@dochasfund.org.uk) or phone 07500 194963 if you would be willing to share some of your story.

Thank you to Karolina for sharing her story above

Dochas Circle of Friends group was awarded some funding to enable us to buy our carers a treat. Some received a meat pack from Ferguson's butchers and others received e card book tokens and exercise fitbits . It was wonderful to see a few of our carers, albeit at a distance, when gifts were delivered. We hope you enjoy them!



Eddie & Margaret,  
Lochgilthead

Jacqueline & Tommy,  
Lochgilthead

### JUST FOR FUN

#### CAN YOU NAME THE PLACES IN SCOTLAND?

The answers will be given in our next newsletter.

1. Very Small Drinks
2. Stupid Chips
3. Won't Find Hot Water Here
4. Two Parts of Your Face
5. Trip Outside the Church
6. One of your Parents is Fit and Healthy
7. Good Looking Card Game
8. Murder with a Garden Tool
9. Not in a Medal Position
10. Can't Live Without This
11. Not Staying
12. Church Surrounds
13. You and I are Fit and Healthy
14. Use a Spoon for This Fish
15. Popular Drink from the Abbey
16. Adds up to 21

### Dochas Staff Contact Details

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## FOCUS ON NEURODIVERGENCY

Dochas supports carers of people with many different debilitating conditions. Some are 'parent carers' who care for a neurodivergent child (or children). This umbrella term encompasses children with Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Autism, ADHD, FASD and other lesser known conditions. These can range from very profound to mild, and each can display different symptoms. Everyday happenings that other children take in their stride can be the cause of 'meltdowns', screaming, lashing out and feeling totally overwhelmed.

Imagine the child is a bottle of coke. Every time something stressful happens the bottle is shaken. Nothing much seems to change. But the bottle is shaken and shaken. The pressure builds and builds and then once home with their parents, in their safe space with their safe people, the lid comes off the bottle. All the shaking results in a lot of mess and try as you might, once the fizzing starts, the lid is next to impossible to get back on.

Let's use Kate as an example. Kate is autistic, school knows she's autistic and have measures in place to help. Kate goes to a mainstream primary school just like every other primary school up and down the land.

Kate arrives at school. She's excited to build a Lego model during soft start. She's been planning it all morning. Only 3 children can play with the Lego at once and Jack, Zoe and Anya got there first. Kate sits at her desk and draws a picture. Her teacher congratulates her on a beautiful picture. But it wasn't a Lego model.

**Shake the bottle.** 🙌

Kate does a maths quiz. She gets 9 out of 10. Her teacher says well done. Kate can't shake the feeling she should have got them all right.

**Shake the bottle.** 🙌

The classroom is loud, the sound of chairs scraping on the floor. Those children laughing! Kate has a pair of ear defenders. She wants to wear them. She knows she's allowed. But she knows it makes her look different. So she doesn't.

**Shake the bottle.** 🙌

At break time Kate is excited to see mummy gave her a cereal bar for snack when she usually has an apple. She'll forgive the change of snack because, you know, it has chocolate chips in it. 2 bites in, a child bumps into her and it falls to the ground. Kate can't eat it now it's dirty, she tries to tell the playground assistant who tells her it is fine, just brush off the dirt, it was even in a packet. But she can't. It's contaminated. So she puts it in the bin.

**Shake the bottle. Twice!** 🙌 🙌 She was excited about the chocolate and now she's also hungry.

Back in the class and David accidentally bumped into Kate when he was handing out some work. She wasn't expecting to be touched.

**Shake the bottle.** 🙌

Lunch time. Kate has ordered chicken goujons, chips and beans. On getting to the front of the queue she realises there's no beans but they have peas and sweet corn. She likes peas and sweet corn but they're mixed together and anyway, it's supposed to be beans.

**Shake the bottle.** 🙌

In the afternoon, Kate has to give a presentation about wind farms. She's passionate about this presentation, she's been researching hard and got to use the class chrome books to do it. She rattles off every fact in the world about wind farms. Her teachers don't notice the anxious wobble to her voice as Kate covers the anxiety with talking a LOT. She's congratulated for an illuminating presentation but Kate is tired and can't hear it.

**Shake the bottle.** 🙌

Andrea is asked to tidy away the pencils at the end of the day. Andrea puts the pencils in the pen pot. Kate really wants to say something but last time she said Andrea was doing it wrong she got a row for tattling. So Kate hurries round behind Andrea separating all the pencils out... and gets a row because she's supposed to be in her seat.

**Shake the bottle.** 🙌

Now shake it twice more because a school day is tiring even if you don't have any type of neurodivergency. Kate's teacher sends a quick message to mum saying

"Kate had a great day, she got 9 out of 10 in our maths quiz and she did a brilliant presentation about windfarms. And she didn't need her ear defenders at all today".

Mum collects Kate and says, "Hey darling, how was your day?" And so the lid comes off. And it takes a long time to let out all the fizz. And it's just as messy as if it had been a literal bottle of coke.



## ANSWERS TO OUR WINTER COMPETITION – 'WOULD I LIE TO YOU?'

Each staff member made 3 statements about themselves, but only ONE is TRUE in each case. TRUE answers are highlighted. No entries received – so no winner!

### Wanida

1. I walked the Great Wall of China.
2. I'm an animal lover.
3. Paris is my favourite city.

### Tracy

1. I was a member of Oxford Women's Boxing Club for 8 years.
2. I won a Blue Peter badge for my interesting and extensive snail collection.
3. I was once mistaken for a top American golfer while being driven around St. Andrews golf course in a buggy during the 2005 Open.

### Peter

1. I would prefer to drink real coffee rather than put salt on instant coffee.
2. I would prefer to shop in Jenner's rather than drive across France.
3. I would prefer to put black treacle on my porridge rather than eat lasagne.

### Heather

1. I have been scuba diving in the Maldives.
2. I have climbed the Mamore mountain range.
3. I have driven a race car round Knockhill racing circuit in Fife.

### Tricia

1. I made my own wedding dress.
2. I can occasionally be seen on TV singing and playing guitar.
3. I have broken my left arm on two separate occasions in exactly the same place.

### Ryan

1. I would rather shop for kitchen gadgets than clothes or shoes.
2. My most embarrassing moment was...going to look in a shop window, not realising the glass was so close and knocking myself out.
3. If I could win a lifetime supply of something it would be Crisps, Crisps and more Crisps!!

### Tracey

1. Though I live on an island that makes loads of whisky, I have only ever drunk it when my mum put it in my bottle when I was a baby.
2. I had a job as a student as Mrs Claus in Santa's grotto.
3. I have climbed all the Munros.

### Alison

1. I am double jointed and can put my legs behind my head.
2. I parachuted out of a plane and landed on top of a poor bloke in a field, much to his surprise.
3. I am distantly related to Robert the Bruce.

## You are invited to join the TAKE 5 CHALLENGE!

Throughout the month of March 2021 ACUMEN Development Worker Sarah McFadzean is encouraging people in the Mid Argyll area to 'Take 5' for themselves to help boost mental and emotional wellbeing.

### What's Involved?

The Challenge is up to you! The idea is to bring some extra movement and fresh air into your daily routine. Choose an activity that suits your ability, some examples could be to take 5 minutes of fresh air each day, enjoy 5 deep breaths outdoors, walk for 5 minutes each day, or if you feel able to jog, run, cycle etc please do so! The main aim is to try to do your Take 5 activity each day in March. Please keep yourself safe.

### Support

We have all been missing social interaction and while we may not be in a position to get together during this challenge, I hope we can use the dedicated Facebook Group to encourage, support and share our challenges.

Join here

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/736076133707953>

### Fund Raising

If you belong to a local Mid Argyll Group and would like to fund raise for them let them know! If you are a local group I'd be delighted if you used the Take 5 Challenge to fund raise for your group.

**Contact:** Please contact

[sarah.mcfadzean@acumennetwork.org](mailto:sarah.mcfadzean@acumennetwork.org) with any queries or to express your interest