

I AM ME SCOTLAND NEWSLETTER

Winter 2025

Introduction

Welcome to the I Am Me Scotland Winter newsletter. This newsletter highlights a lot of wonderful community work. If you, or someone you know would like to be added to the mailing list for this Newsletter, please get in touch with us at IAmMeScotland@outlook.com

If you are new to the newsletter, head to page 14 to find out “What we do”.

Disability Friendly

A network of Places where disabled and vulnerable people feel valued and supported within their communities.

Join us, to create a Disability Friendly network across Scotland at

IAmMeScotland@outlook.com



Welcome new Disability Friendly Places

We have recently signed up 4 new places to join the disability friendly network. These are:

- Tastebuds in Paisley.
- Engage Renfrewshire in Paisley.
- Renfrewshire Learning Disability Service in Paisley.
- Karen Adam MSP in Aberdeenshire.

Good news also from Glasgow Airport

Occupational Health and Safety Services (OCS) have been working hard to train their staff at Glasgow Airport on Disability Friendly. OCS offer a range of support services designed to enhance passenger experience, safety, and accessibility at Glasgow Airport.

This includes assistance for passengers with reduced mobility, baggage handling, and special needs support. OCS is committed to ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for all travelers, providing services such as meet and greet assistance, wheelchair support, and more. Congratulations and well done on training so many people!

Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service

Disability Friendly is supported by the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, who have signed up 27 offices and trained 94 staff.

On our website, you can find Disability Friendly Places in our mapping system through Google My Maps, under the Disability Friendly section of the website.

List of areas.

This is a list of the number of Disability Friendly Places in each area:

AYRSHIRE & ARRAN

(which includes East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire). 1 Place

BORDERS – 0.

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY – 0.

FIFE & FORTH VALLEY (which includes Fife, Clackmannanshire, Falkirk, Stirling) – 1 place.

GRAMPIAN (which includes Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City, Moray) – 0.

GREATER GLASGOW & CLYDE (which includes Glasgow City, East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire, West Dunbartonshire, Inverclyde) – 14 places.

HIGHLANDS, ISLANDS & ARGYLL & BUTE (which includes Highland, Argyll & Bute, Outer Hebrides, Orkney Islands & Shetland Islands) – 0.

LANARKSHIRE (which includes North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire) – 0.

LOTHIAN (which includes Edinburgh City, East Lothian, Midlothian & West Lothian) – 3 places.

TAYSIDE (which includes Angus, Dundee City & Perth & Kinross) – 0.

CROWN OFFICE & PROCURATOR FISCAL SERVICE – 27 office.

Total Places Signed Up – 47.
Total People Trained – 264.

Disability Friendly Feedback

Disability Friendly was launched in June 2025. The aim of the initiative is to create a network of Disability Friendly places across Scotland where disabled people are valued and included within their community. The initiative is supported by COPFS and funded by Awards for All (Scotland). To date there are 47 premises signed up, with 258 staff and volunteers trained. 127 feedback forms have been completed, helping us to continue to evaluate and improve the initiative.

Training Feedback.

- 98% enjoyed the training.
- 100% learned about the understanding of diversity of disabilities.
- 100% learned about the recognition of the importance of inclusion.
- 100% learned about how to identify barriers to inclusion.
- 100% learned about understanding unconscious bias.
- 98% learned about understanding the equality legal framework.

An update from west Lothian.

We were delighted to hear from Mirren Murray, Administrative Assistant for Core Drilling Specialists. Mirren was involved with the charity while she was at school. Now in the world of work, Mirren has now become the Disability Friendly Champion in C.D.S. She told us why she wants to continue to be involved.

‘Growing up with an uncle who has Prader-Willi syndrome taught me the importance of patience, understanding, and inclusivity. His experiences sparked my early interest in advocating for people with disabilities and creating a more accessible world.

In high school, I volunteered with I Am Me Scotland through their Keep Safe Ambassador programme. It expanded my understanding of disability beyond my uncle’s experience and showed how small changes in attitudes and environments can make a big difference.

I also learned about disability hate crime and the importance of building safe, respectful communities.

After completing the programme, I continued volunteering, helping with bag packing, supporting training sessions in other schools, and attending the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service ceremony, which recognised the charity’s incredible work.



Although COVID-19 paused my involvement, I’ve remained committed to inclusion. After university, I started full-time work at C.D.S. (Scotland) Ltd and nominated my workplace to join the Disability Friendly initiative.

This allows staff to receive training and helps create a more welcoming environment. It feels like full circle to go from a school ambassador to a

workplace champion. I hope to keep advocating for disability awareness and stay connected with I Am Me Scotland.'

Saint Mirren Accessibility Review

We have been working with Saint Mirren Football Club for the past few months to carry out an independent accessibility review of the SMiSA stadium, in preparation of the club becoming the first Disability Friendly Football Stadium in Scotland.



The team have worked closely with supporters and the SMDSA (Saint Mirren Disability Supporters Association) to prepare an accessibility report, which has led to the introduction of a new accessibility policy for the club.

198 people took part in online surveys, workshops, one to one discussions and mystery shopping exercises. Thank you to everyone who took part.

In addition to working with the club, the team are also working closely with SMDSA to help re-brand and re-launch the association, in preparation for the Disability Friendly training in January 2026.

How can we help?

We have worked with lots of different organisations on Disability Friendly, and this has resulted in some new ideas of how we can help businesses communicate with people better. All of our resources are tested with children, young people and adults with additional support needs.

Communication Prompts

Communication can sometimes be difficult for people if they are upset, find it difficult to speak to people they don't know, or for people whose

1st language isn't English. These Communication Cards have pictorial images to help people communicate. Images include how people are feeling, telling people what has happened, and how they can help.

These cards can be tailored to your business needs, including menu items etc. Just contact the team for more information. Card packs are £3.50 each.

Sensory Packs

Our sensory support packs are designed to help children, young people, and adults with disabilities feel safe, calm, and in control. Each pack includes headphones and a thoughtful selection of sensory tools to support emotional regulation, reduce anxiety, and provide comfort in busy or unfamiliar environments. If you would like Sensory Support Packs for your business, please contact our team for more information. Sensory Packs are £25 each.

Hate Crime

“A Hate Crime is any crime motivated wholly or partly by malice and ill-will (hostility & prejudice) based on one or more actual or perceived characteristic(s)”

Find out more about Disability Hate Crime by clicking on the link below.
Disability hate Crime Video Link – [CLICK HERE](#)

Good Work in our Communities from Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH)

SAMH said, we were delighted to open Scotland's first SAMH Nook in Glasgow on 23rd October. This will provide anyone aged 10+ with access to information, advice and support about mental health and wellbeing with no need for appointments, referrals or waiting lists.

We have worked hard to design a service that is welcoming and nurturing , where people can ask once and get help fast. We will be opening further Nooks in Aberdeen, Edinburgh and other locations over the next few years. Find out more about The Nook and how you can support us:

www.samh.org.uk/about-us/the-nook

Education Platform

Our Education Platform is being utilised in all 32 local authorities by police officers, teachers, health & social care practitioners, and parents and carers. There are lessons and training resources on various topics. If you would like FREE access to the platform, you can register here at: iammescotlandeducation.org.uk/register/

We offer training and awareness lessons on topics such as: Exploitation Awareness, Disability Awareness, My Police, Children's Rights, Hate Crime, Alcohol & Substances, Anti-Social Behaviour and Nicotine, Tobacco & Vape Awareness.

So far, we have 3365 people using the platform.

- 2250 of them are teachers, our biggest group.
- 542 of them are police officers.
- 59 of them are from health and social care.
- And 514 of them are from other backgrounds.

Ready To Talk

Thank you to everyone who attended the "Ready to Talk" campaign launch in October.

Professionals came from all over Renfrewshire to hear about the crucial work being done with our communities to highlight Child Sexual Exploitation.

Thank you to Renfrewshire Council, Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee, Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership & Saint Mirren Charitable Foundation for making it happen.

A special thank you to Aoife & Matthew who shared their personal experiences of CSE at the launch.

As part of the campaign, Wonderfools Theatre Company delivered the “It’s Not Okay” play to S2’s throughout Renfrewshire.

It was a busy week with 9 performances and workshops to follow exploring what healthy and unhealthy relationships mean, and how you can get help and support if you are worried about yourself or someone else. Thank you to all of the schools that took part. We had a great week.

Exploring Deaf Awareness Through Animation

The team have applied for funding for a deaf awareness animation and lesson.

The team are planning to work with young people with lived experience on the script for the animation and development of the lesson. The interactive learning resource which raises awareness of deaf and hearing loss, ways to communicate, barriers faced and how to help remove these barriers, creating a Scotland where everyone can feel valued and included within their community.

Should I Tell Someone

Should I Tell Someone is based on real-life experiences of four young people.

This short film follows Alfie, Callum, Millie, and Zara, four friends navigating complex relationships, peer pressure, online risks, and blurred boundaries.

Each of them is facing something they didn’t expect. Something they are not sure how to talk about.

We’re planning to turn our “Should I Tell Someone?” films into a comprehensive learning package for schools and practitioners. This future resource will cover crucial topics like child sexual exploitation,

grooming, coercive control, misogyny, and harmful relationships, both online and offline.

During our Ready to Talk campaign, young people told us they have lots of questions. Thanks to funding from Renfrewshire Council, we'll host and film a Q&A with people with lived experience, so schools across Scotland can use it to raise awareness.

Our goal is to host this Q&A within an interactive lessons that build confidence, skills, and positive connections among young people, helping them understand healthy relationships, spot signs of exploitation, and know how to seek help for themselves or a friend. We're currently seeking funding to make this happen, watch this space for updates.

10 Year Celebration

A huge thank you to everyone who joined us for our 10-Year Anniversary Bingo Afternoon! The room was filled with fun, laughter, and even a few unforgettable dance moves (you know who you are 😊).

It's hard to believe how quickly the last decade has flown by. Along the way, we've had the privilege of meeting some truly amazing people who have helped shape our journey.

To everyone who has supported the charity over these 10 incredible years—thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Here's to the next 10 years of making a difference together!

A special thank you to everyone who donated raffle prizes including Saint Mirren Football Club, Tesco Linwood, Morrisons Falside Road and Noah's Home and Gifts. We raised a whopping £1300.



Thank you Lorraine

Lorraine joined the I Am Me board as a Trustee 10 years ago, and is sadly stepping down as a trustee. In those 10 years, Lorraine has been an amazing



support to the team and others on the board. Your wisdom and sparkle will be missed.

Board Members

Molly and Mariya have recently joined the Board of Trustees, bringing experience in law, fundraising and the wisdom of youth, amongst many other great talents. We are looking forward to working with them both.

Thanks to Artemis Flowers for such lovely flowers for Christmas gifts for our trustees. Eileen, Anne, Mark, Roddy, Ruth, Fiona, Mariya, Molly, Sam & Lorraine - Thank you!

Holly & Carol

Carol & Holly completed 100 miles in October (running and walking) to raise funds for the Scottish Charity Air Ambulance - £582 raised in total (with gift aid) Thank you to everyone who donated.

Aimee

We are delighted that Aimee has now returned from her maternity leave. Aimee is excited to get busy with Disability Friendly, so watch this space for updates!

Team Christmas Celebration

We had a lovely Christmas Brunch with our wee team and some of our fantastic volunteers/supporters and friends. Thank you for all your amazing support... always!

Provost Card Competition

Renfrewshire Provost's Christmas Card Competition had a theme of "A Christmas Eve Journey with Santa" and this year she received an amazing 1,138 cards. The winning designs will be recreated in a digital format as her official Christmas cards and sent out all over the world.

We were amazed at the fantastic creativity of the cards received this year! Every card that was submitted to the competition will be sent to our elderly residents across Renfrewshire. Thank you to everyone who took part

Christmas Fund Raising

I Am Me Scotland organised a Christmas stall on Thursday the 4th of December. The team were busy crafting some Christmas delights to sell including Christmas gonks, Washcloth Reindeers, Christmas pudding baubles and lots of sweet treats.

A huge thank-you to Susan Allan and John Allan who kindly baked and donated some amazing tasty cupcakes.

Also a MASSIVE thank-you to everyone who donated. Thanks to you all we managed to raise a whopping £273.75.

Congratulations to Linda Murray, Lisa Marie Hughes, Emma Shields, Lynn Mitchel, and John McNaughtan for winning the lovely raffle prizes!

Scottish Public Service Awards

You Are Not Alone (Polmont) was recognised at the Scottish Public Sector Awards. This award is testament to the power of partnership working and collaboration with young people. Their voices and experiences will help prevent other young people from facing exploitation.

Also a huge thank you to our partners from Police Scotland, Polmont YOI and Renfrewshire Council. Positive partnerships shape great things!



Crown Office Equality Conference

Carol was invited to speak at the COPFS (Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service) Equality Conference 2025 in Edinburgh. With history as

the central theme, the event provided a powerful platform to reflect on the harsh realities faced by disabled people in Scotland from the 1700s onwards, and the significant role legislation played in shaping those experiences. Today, we are fortunate to live in a society that increasingly embraces the social model of disability and values inclusion. The conference also offered an important opportunity to showcase the excellent work being carried out in partnership with COPFS to strengthen and promote the Disability Friendly network.

Colostomy UK

Colostomy UK believe that having a stoma should never be a barrier to living life to the full. We're here to offer reassurance, practical help, and a community that understands. Whether you are due to have stoma surgery, getting used to your new life, further along the journey, or a carer or Healthcare professional, our support services and campaigns are designed to help you every step of the way.

Our stoma helpline is available every day of the year, offering friendly, confidential support from people who truly understand life with a stoma. We also help to set up local support groups, peer-to-peer connections, and have an active online community, where you can share experiences, ask questions, and find encouragement.

Colostomy UK Beyond support, we're campaigning for change, from improving access to stoma-friendly toilets and tackling stigma, to making sure people with stomas are represented and understood. Through projects like "Stoma Aware" and "Team Colostomy UK", we're challenging misconceptions, building inclusion, and helping people live life with confidence. If you or someone you know could benefit from support, or you'd like to help make your community more stomafriendly, visit www.Colostomyuk.org or email hello@colostomyuk.org Together, we can make sure no one faces life with a stoma alone.

Keep Safe Scotland App

The Keep Safe Scotland App is no longer operating. Please ensure you delete this from your phone, if you have downloaded it already.

Just Giving

I Am Me Scotland relies on fundraising and grant donations. If you can help, please email us at IAmMeScotland.co.uk

Thank You

Huge, massive THANKS to our Board of Trustees for all your support over the past year. Also, a big THANK YOU to our funders (Foundation Scotland, Awards for All, Reo Stakis, Renfrewshire Council & Arnold Clark) for all your support in 2024-2025. Biggest thanks to the Team, Volunteers & Supporters for all your incredible work.... always!

Happy birthday to Megan, Billy and Colin.

About I Am Me

You can find out more about I Am Me Scotland by visiting IAmMeScotland.co.uk or you can watch our short video by clicking [HERE](#)

Charity Partner

We are looking for organisations who can become our Charity partner and help us to make a difference in Scotland. If you think you can help, we would love to hear from you.

Thank you for reading our newsletter.

The I Am Me Team.