



The Blether

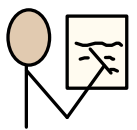
March 2021



welcome

Welcome to The Blether!

Hello from everyone at Thera (Scotland) and welcome to the third edition of the Blether in 2020/21.



writing

An update from Suzanne Abbate, Managing Director

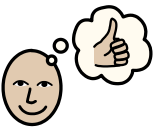
I am writing this in the middle of Lockdown number 3. It is really hard to stay positive but looking through all of the photographs we have to share in this edition has made me very grateful that we are all safe and well.

As always, our staff have been like superheroes. Every time I speak to anyone in Thera (Scotland) I see people smiling and making the most of what we can do - thank you all for your smiles and positive attitudes.

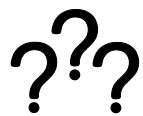
As we headed into Winter, we were all really worried about what the future would hold - so many questions. Can we have a Halloween party? What will Christmas be like? Will Santa still come? Will I be able to see my friends and family? We didn't need to worry because our teams pulled out all the stops to bring magic to everyone we support. Thank you!



grateful



positive



questions



magic

Also in this edition of The Blether:

- How to book a virtual visit or a phone call with Jordan Allan, Service Quality Director for Thera (Scotland)
- News from our Board
- Pictures and stories of what has been keeping us all busy



contents



An update from Jordan Allan - Service Quality Director



hello

Hello my name is Jordan Allan, Service Quality Director for Thera (Scotland) and I have been in post since May 2020.



achieve

It has been a very strange journey not getting to meet you all in person. However, I have managed to achieve so many things and I have managed to speak to lots of people on video calls or over the phone and met lots of our amazing staff.



zoom



excited

I feel really excited to be the Service Quality Director for Thera (Scotland) and I can't wait to meet everyone in person.



Virtual Visits



zoom

Jordan has been checking in with the people we support virtually using Microsoft Teams, and most recently Zoom.

He's been doing this for over two months now and the visits have been going really well.

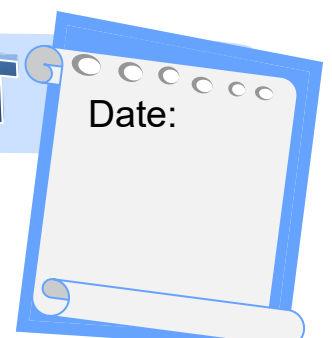


contact

If you would like a virtual visit or a phone call, please contact Jordan Allan on 07718962307 or Jordan.Allan@thera.co.uk



SQD VIRTUAL VISIT



SQD: _____

Spoke to: _____

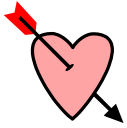


Virtual events and competitions



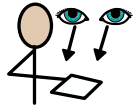
last year

Towards the end of last year we have held lots of different events. We had a pumpkin competition, a Halloween fancy-dress competition and a Christmas card competition. All the events were held on Zoom and it was great to see so many of you take part.



valentines

So far this year we have held a Valentines “show and tell” event on Zoom. The event was well attended and everyone got a chance to show and tell.



show and tell

Dawn made a scrapbook and shared it with the group. Helen made some Valentines day cards. Carol shared her Valentines day card that she recieved from Malcolm. Gavin bought a Valentines day card, chocolates and flowers for his neighbour. Jimmy made a snowman indoors for us.

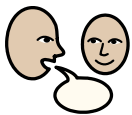


Easter

We are looking forward to organising more competitions and virtual events. With our next one being our Easter egg competition on Tuesday 30 March, 1:30pm - 2:30pm.

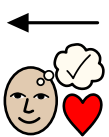


Company Membership



say

We are on the lookout for new company members in Thera (Scotland) where you would have a say in how the company is run and be able to vote at our Annual General Meeting (AGM).



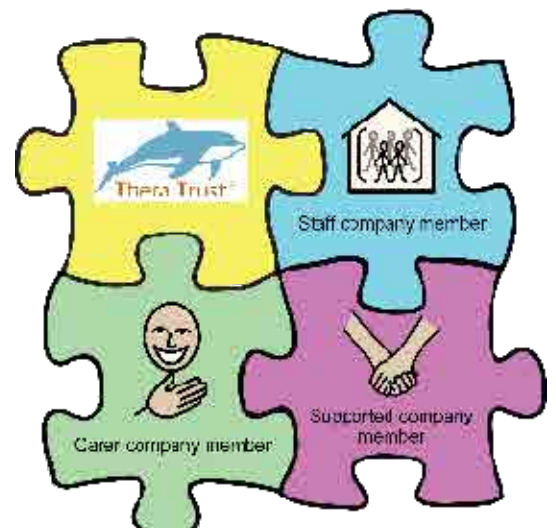
interested

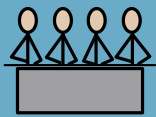
If you are interested or would like to know more about what company membership is please contact



contact

Emma Willis-Butler on 07718961919 or Emma.Willis-Butler@thera.co.uk





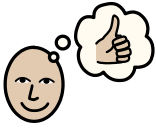
News from our Board



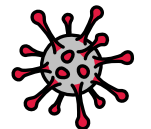
chairman

Our Chair Anne Jackson will be retiring from the Board in May 2021 after four years' service and Fiona Drury left the Board in November 2020. We are very grateful for everything they have done for Thera (Scotland) - thank you!

As we look to the future, we have lots to be positive about - the days getting longer again and once we have vaccinations that can help protect us against COVID-19, we will hopefully be able to get out and about soon and we have learned new skills that will stay with us for life.



positive



COVID-19



A message from Anne Jackson - Chair of the Board

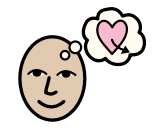


chairman

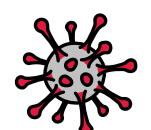
I have been part of the Thera (Scotland) family for four years now and Chairman for three of these years...and what a four years it has been; changes and great moments; challenges and steady demonstration of what we believe in and of course, COVID-19.

They say that Hope Springs Eternal ... whatever the truth of that I think we all crave it. Hope, that will let us look forward to being able to hug our loved ones; of having a meal with friends with lots of talk and laughter; of getting on a bus, a train or a plane and going somewhere other than staying local and no fear of another lockdown.

COVID-19 has focused our aspirations right down to the basic but most important things ... love; companionship; purpose and freedoms. This is what Thera is all about; bringing hope and freedom to people who have more barriers to these things than most and because of that have often settled for less than they should.



hope



COVID-19



A message from Anne Jackson - Chair of the Board



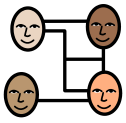
spring

But Spring is just around the corner - a time of rebirth and renewal. On my frequent walks I can see snowdrops and daffodils coming up in spite of all the rain, snow and sleet. I have a panoramic view of my garden from the kitchen table and I have noticed a pair of blackbirds hopping around on my beech hedge. I feel it's a bit cold for them to be thinking of babies but they know best and the cycle of life rolls on in spite of restrictions.



reflect

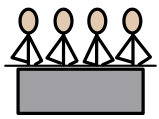
It makes me reflect on the time I have been with Thera (Scotland). It has been such a privilege. I have met people who are committed not to just supporting people, but seeing past barriers and finding the individuals and the personalities of those we work with. One of the striking things evident in the restrictions is the amazing resilience of staff and of those we support.



connected

What great ideas have been hatched to keep people connected and engaged and what courage has been shown by all of the Thera family to face disappointments and go on to fight another day.

As I come to the end of my time with Thera, again I think of renewal. There will be a new Chairman of the Thera (Scotland) Board who will work with the management team to take the company to new heights. To establish and call attention to a strengthened reputation in Scotland; for the work we do, emphasising the strong ethos and values that puts those we support genuinely at the centre of all that is planned and done.



board

I have loved to be part of it all and look forward to hearing the name of Thera mentioned more and more in the future in connection with innovation, the best possible practice and as leaders in the field and I will feel proud and privileged that I was part of that just for a little while.



loved



thank you

Thank you for having me on the journey.





Having fun and keeping busy



home

We hope you enjoy all our pictures and stories of what has been keeping us busy . . .



pumpkin

Pumpkin Fun

In October we had a Pumpkin Carving Competition, the standard was really high, and everyone was keen to showcase their creative skills.



well done

Everyone who took part got some Halloween goodies and joined a Zoom call to share their masterpieces. Well done to everyone who took part and congratulations to Gavin, who was our winner.





Having fun and keeping busy



fancy dress

Fancy Dress

To keep us in the Halloween spirit, we held a fancy-dress competition. We loved seeing everyone's costumes and had a Zoom call to decide on the winners - even the judges got dressed up!





Having fun and keeping busy

Christmas Time



christmas

To get everyone into the Christmas spirit, we had a Christmas card competition. Here are some of our creations. Well done everyone, they were amazing!

A big thank you to the team at Gig Buddies - as you can see the craft boxes were really popular.





Christmas card competition winners



This is the first prize design from Scott - we loved it so much it was our Thera (Scotland) Christmas card.



This is Jimmy's Christmas card design. It won second prize and Jimmy now has the design on a mug to keep forever.



This is Jordan's design - it won third place. It was put onto a pack of mini cards for her to send to her friends and family.



Having fun and keeping busy



Christmas Shopping

Here is Scott doing his Christmas shopping in Inverness town centre and enjoying the Christmas lights at the Eastgate Centre.



A Scottish Christmas tradition

We all love the sound of Bagpipes at Christmas time. This is Alex enjoying the pipes courtesy of Cherry Road outreach programme during the Christmas season. A great time was had.



Sweet tooth

Alex has also been busy making a cake with David, one of his support workers. He also enjoyed eating it! It looks deeeelish Alex.



Having fun and keeping busy



home

A year of firsts

Gemma and Craig moved into their new home in July 2019, but returned home to their parents for the festive period last time.



pandemic

The pandemic made going home for Christmas 2020 not an option and at first everyone was disappointed. However, they were able to spend Christmas together and the staff made every effort to ensure they had a happy time doing lots of fun, happy activities.



christmas

We turned the garage into a grotto, with fairy lights, garden furniture and a heater and both had an outdoor (in the garage) visit from their parents on Christmas day.



dinner

Gemma and Craig had a great time and really enjoyed their home cooked Christmas dinner with all the trimmings.

Christmas Wonderland



christmas

This is Jimmy from Falkirk; he went to a Christmas Wonderland held locally at the Elgin Park Centre.



competition

Jimmy really enjoyed participating in the pumpkin carving competition and Halloween fancy dress competitions and was delighted to win second place in the Christmas card competition.



mug

The personalised mug he won with his design on sits on his unit for everyone to see.





Having fun and keeping busy



february

Some of the young people we have recently started to support really enjoyed the festivities and taking part in competitions.

To celebrate Chinese New Year, at the beginning of February, we decided to do some 'Chinese New Year' crafts. We made lanterns, dragons and firecrackers, non-flammable of course!



support

Lockdown has stopped many of the other groups we attend, but Thera (Scotland) are still managing to provide support for us – we are so happy that we can still come here!

We are also planning a Burns Supper. This will obviously be before our Chinese celebrations - we are designing a 'tartan tablecloth'.



burns night

We are having 'haggis, tatties and neeps' and do hope that we can get someone to address our 'haggis' as this is a Scottish tradition.

We hope you enjoy our creations,

Team 'The HUB!'





A message from Diane Carson –

Operations Manager; Midlothian, Edinburgh and Falkirk



thank you

I would like to say a huge thank you to all of the staff who have worked so hard during this past year. It has been a journey that no-one ever thought they would take - certainly not for this length of time and with so many changes to restrictions throughout this pandemic.



difficult

It's been difficult to adjust to the new normal way of living but there have been so many positive outcomes achieved during this time which is just fantastic; not only for the people we support, but also for the staff teams. They have shown their commitment to getting it right for the people we support by being flexible and very creative which has made such a difference to each of them. What a skilled staff team we have and I am so pleased that they have managed to keep motivated - especially having to wear full PPE at all times.



PPE

The people we support are also showing how well they have adapted to the restrictions in place along with the changes to their usual daily routines. All have been encouraged to develop new skills such as using technology to keep in touch with their family and friends which has been a lifeline to so many.



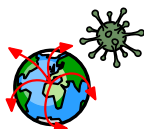
skills

I am also pleased to say that we have recruited some fantastic new staff over the last few months and all are settling in well and building relationships with the people we support. I look forward to them developing in their roles and sharing their existing skills and experiences with the people we support.



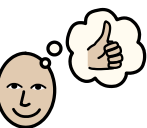
staff

During the pandemic we have had much needed support from our internal teams who have kept us updated throughout the pandemic and also from our Health and Social Care Partnership who have given ongoing support and guidance to Thera (Scotland) and the other local support Providers. This has also led to positive working relationships being formed.



pandemic

I feel positive about the coming months and look forward to when we can all get together and celebrate the end of lockdown restrictions.

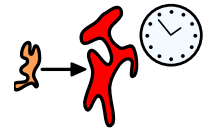


positive



A message from Scott Harkness –

Operations Manager; Highlands



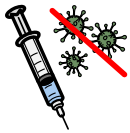
transition

It goes without saying the previous few months have continued to be a time of transition and change from a perspective of COVID-19 and the measures imposed such as lockdown.



understanding

As we were previously in tier one, this has been a significant change for us all - especially the people we support. Perhaps the only positive from the previous lockdown is that it has equipped us with some resilience and understanding of what to expect with the new lockdown upon us once more.



vaccine

On a brighter note, the vaccination programme for social care staff is currently being rolled out to all staff who wish to partake. This vaccination programme has also extended to the people we support, with some having received theirs and others with confirmed appointments.



news

We are also awaiting further news on the staff testing programme. All staff have been offered the opportunity to self-test and once the kits arrive we can begin this programme. Therefore, with the opportunity to both test weekly and each person whom wishes to be vaccinated, the levels of risk will hopefully reduce and offer some light at the end of the tunnel.



PPE

This will by no means indicate that we will be complacent or lose focus as PPE and infection control measures will continue to be in place until otherwise instructed.



staff

We have also recruited new staff to our team and they have recently begun their journey with Thera (Scotland). I would personally like to welcome you all. We selected each and every one of you because we feel that you have the values and skills to further enhance our dedicated team.



training

I am aware that there will be lots of new people for you all to meet and routines/procedures to learn. However I am confident with time, training and support from the team around you, this initial transitional period will be successful. If you have any queries, as always, please just ask and we will be happy to assist.



thank you

I am very proud of each and everyone's individual endeavours and collective strength during these difficult and uncertain times.

Thank you all and a huge well done!



Get involved with Thera (Scotland)



fundraising

If you are interested in fundraising with Thera (Scotland), please visit our fundraising page:

www.thera.co.uk/get-involved/fundraising/



team

Thera Trust also have a new fundraising team who would love to hear from you. If you have any ideas you would like to discuss around fun fundraising in 2021 contact Alice Fletcher:

Alice.Fletcher@thera.co.uk



donate

You can also donate to Thera Trust by choosing Thera as your chosen charity on AmazonSmile.



website

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices and shopping features.

The only difference is every time you shop on AmazonSmile, Amazon donates on your behalf, at no extra cost to you!

To find out more information visit:

www.thera.co.uk/news/amazonsmile/

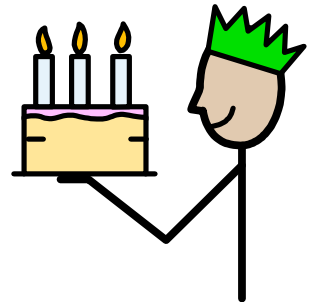
smile.amazon.co.uk



Birthday Wishes

Did you celebrate your birthday in a lockdown stuck at home?
We're sending our best wishes - for you are not alone ...
This last year was not easy, but soon we'll all be free
To have a birthday party with friends and cake and tea
Stay safe and just remember, there are better days to come
To celebrate the happy times and meet with everyone
Look forward to the future - to the Spring and sunny weather
With love from Thera (Scotland) and from us folks at The Blether

A poem by Liz Rankin



enjoyed

We hope you have enjoyed reading about what has been
Happening in Thera (Scotland) recently.

We would love to share our next edition of The Blether with you.



email

If you would like to receive The Blether by email, please email
Liz.Rankin@thera.co.uk to be added to our mailing list.



contact

How to contact us

If you would like to find out more about Thera (Scotland) or have
a story you would like to tell, please get in touch:

- Email **tsoffice@thera.co.uk**
- Visit **www.therascotland.co.uk**
- Or call **0300 303 1286**