



# Making Recovery Happen

### Welcome to August's Newsletter

Our new website was launched on Friday 29th, the website is part of DA's plan to reach more people concerned about alcohol and other drugs through digital technology. Luan Grugeon, Chief Executive, said "we recognise increasingly people get their facts from the internet. We want to ensure people in the North East have access to useful, factual information".

The website includes our first DA infomercial and the facility to email the helpline directly so people who wish to can remain anonymous whilst being able to access advice and support. So have a browse and check out the new features.

### What's the buzz

We have a new feature in our newsletter called '**what's the buzz**', which gives you the chance to ask us anything you want to know about any drug or alcohol related issue, email your question to:

[friends@drugsaction.co.uk](mailto:friends@drugsaction.co.uk)

### One World Day 2014

Also this month North East Scotland's Equality Network (NESEN) will hold 'One World Day 2014' on Saturday 30th which celebrates and brings together our diverse cultures, 'breaking chains and making change'. The aim is to show how we can all work together to promote justice locally and globally.



### Always putting people first

At DA we put our service users at the heart of any decisions we make. We routinely consult with our clients on their satisfaction with the services they have received and consult heavily with them and frontline staff on new service developments. That way we can be sure that our services are relevant to local needs.

We recognise that we live in a diverse society and believe in treating everyone as equals regardless of their race, gender, sexuality, disability, social background or problems they may be experiencing. Feedback is crucial in ensuring we keep putting people first and treating all service users with respect, compassion & dignity, so comments such as this are inspiring: "*The workers at the drop-in never judged me for what I was doing or the choices I made. They really saw past the prostitution and the drugs and saw me as a person*".

Angus McCurrach, Service Manager at DA stated "*it's amazing how many different activities there are going on at DA. Last week we had a sponsored beach clear up at Balmedie, the women's group were making brooches, the music group were rocking at The Foyer and today the Activities Group are going boxing! Putting people first and listening to what people want to do has led to some amazing experiences. I can't wait to see what the future holds!*"



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## What's the buzz

Each month we will answer your burning questions about any drug or alcohol related issue, so that you know the facts. Due to the rise in Ketamine club culture the feature starts off with information about the popular drug.



Q "What are the dangers of Ketamine?"  
A "Ketamine, is a powerful general anaesthetic which stops you feeling pain and is used for operations on humans and animals which is why it is known amongst those using it for other purposes, for example within the club scene, as 'horse tranquiliser'. It comes in an off white powder or a clear odourless liquid.

The effects of ketamine are variable, in low doses it can make you feel very relaxed in a quiet setting but in a night club it can make you feel very energetic. In higher doses you can hallucinate and feel very detached from your own body and surroundings.

The effects of ketamine don't last long but until they wear off it can cause a loss of feeling within the body and paralysis of the muscles - meaning you could hurt yourself quite badly and not know it. Ketamine use can affect breathing and how your heart works, long term use can cause high blood pressure and it has recently been discovered to cause serious bladder problems.

Ketamine is a Class C drug, it is illegal to possess, give away or sell.

## A FUNdraising day out for all the family!

On Sunday 17th August 2014 the dulcet tones of bagpipes filled the morning air as 20 motorbikes set off on a charity bike run. Local bagpiper, Calum Lawrie, commenced a day of fun for all the family piping as the motorbikes set off from Tullos on a route including Stonehaven, Banchory, Ballater, Alford and Westhill.

Bikers rejoined the fun in Tullos early afternoon where the family fun day was in full swing. The Cammach Business Centre on Greenbank Road, was transformed from work place to child friendly space with attractions to entertain all ages. Guests enjoyed a BBQ, fruit kebabs and frozen yogurt while listening to local band, 'The Otherside'.



Kids were entertained with a bouncy castle, face painting, The DA Loomband Challenge, arts and crafts and more. Meanwhile mums were pampered with neck and shoulder massage, mini facials, manicures and even reflexology. This event was a fun day for all the family and contributed to the work of 5 local charities of which DA is one.

The total amount raised is in excess of £2,500 and this money will be shared with 5 worthy charities. A huge thank you to all those involved in planning, organising and attending the event.

We will keep you updated on the next event.





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This month meet Gillian Maclean, Incite Drugs Worker at DA



Q. How did you become involved in DA and what attracted you to the organisation?

A. I was a school nurse at Alford Academy and part of my role involved training the young people on a range of subjects which included Drug and Alcohol overdose training. I got in touch with DA to see if someone from the organisation could come and jointly deliver the training with me which Kenny Malcolm did. We delivered the training jointly for three years. Although I really enjoyed my role at Alford Academy I wanted to be involved in a more specialist service supporting individuals which DA offer, so I applied for a vacancy and was fortunate enough to get it.

Q. What is your role in DA?

A. My role is split, I am a Drugs Worker in the Incite team which is a service for people affected by stimulant use. We offer quick responses to individuals using stimulants, their friends and families through one to one counselling support and advice. Additionally we deliver training in New Psychoactive Substance (NPS) and Drugs Awareness to a range of professionals. The other part of my role is Drugs Worker for Young People in Aberdeen City, this is for young people aged between 13- 25 who are using substances. This involves me working in schools, Children's homes and communities offering one to one support to individuals, families and staff members. Legal highs are the main concern at the moment with the young people I work with. Next month I will be attending the Guidance Teachers Conference in Dunfermline to deliver presentations on NPS to Guidance Teachers throughout Scotland, so my role can be quite varied.

Q. What are the challenges?

A. One of the main challenges within Incite is juggling location and time, this is an Aberdeenshire service so it's very wide ranging. In one day I can be in Peterhead, Inverurie, Banchory and Portlethen. I like to do all that I can to help a person change and improve their quality of life and it can be challenging at times but more for the individuals having to alter their present lifestyle, substance use, mind set and behaviour. This work needs to be client led and they need to be fully supported in setting achievable and sustainable goals to allow them to move forward.

Q. Can you tell us a bit about legal highs, what should people be aware of?

A. With legal highs, you don't always know what you're taking, the products and chemicals change frequently so you can't be certain of the purity and strength. They may also contain illegal substances and mixed with alcohol can be dangerous. Some people's mental health is impacted by legal high use, we are seeing many youngsters experiencing short term psychosis which seems to be linked to their legal highs use. Withdrawals can be painful and emotionally straining. People should always be supported coming off legal highs or any other drug by professionals and a good team of friends and family. If anyone would like more information on legal highs or other stimulants they can contact our 7 day Helpline on 01224 594700.



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## Dates for your diary

**Launch of DA's new website:** Friday 29th August 2014, check out our DA infomercial.

**Womens' Group:** Every Tuesday at 12.00pm- 1.00pm at 6 Virginia Street.

**SMART Recovery in Aberdeen:** Every Thursday here at evening at 7 Hadden Street, 7.00pm- 8.30pm.

**SMART Recovery in Stonehaven:** Every Wednesday evening at Stonehaven Community Centre, Bath Street, 7.00pm- 8.30pm.

**Activities Group:** Every Friday here at 7 Hadden Street, 2.00pm – 4.00pm.

**One World Day 2014:** North East Scotland's Equality Network, Rosemount Viaduct, Saturday 30th August 2014.

All feedback on our newsletter gratefully received at:  
**friends@drugsaction.co.uk**

**Other contact details:**  
Helpline: 01224 594700  
Mobile: 07927 192706  
Email: **helpline@drugsaction.co.uk**

**General Enquiries:**  
Email: info@drugsaction.co.uk  
Business Support: 01224 577120  
Address: 7 Hadden Street, Aberdeen AB11 6NU



## Great success at Balmedie Beach Clear-up!

On Friday 1st August DA staff, clients, family member and friends turned up to DA's sponsored beach clear up at Balmedie and collected sacks and sacks of rubbish, helping restore one of our local natural treasures back to it's former beauty. This sponsored event has raised in excess of £500 which will go some way in helping us continue delivering the Activity group.

A barbeque was provided to boost energy and a special thanks to *Colin Fraser* and *Lurch Monster* (Tillydrone's local butcher) for providing this. This was a huge team effort both in organising the event and for those who turned up on the day, including Charlie the teddy bear.

We hope this will be the first of many fundraising events not only in aid of the Activity group but across all of our DA services. We set ourselves a fundraising target of £25,000 for the year to July 2014, and we are delighted to announce that we have reached £25,059 for this period. A huge thank you to everyone who has helped raise these funds which contributes to activities not funded under our contracted work such as the various groups we run.

*We would love to hear from you if you have any ideas for fundraising or wish to become involved. Please contact Nicky Findlay on 01224 577120.*