

# *Fife Bipolar Group*

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*www.cfbg.co.uk*

*Issue 35 October 09*



## *DLA at Risk...*

*protest against the changes*

*see page 8 for details*

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## About the Fife Bipolar Group

We meet once a month in Kirkcaldy & welcome people from all over Fife. The main purpose of the group is to offer a supportive environment to those affected by bipolar affective disorder and allow them to talk about and share their experiences with others. Membership is free & you do not need a referral.

We provide information & support through our group via the website, a monthly magazine & regular activities that raise awareness of living with bipolar. If you'd like to talk or just be around people experiencing what you're going through, please come join us!

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## People with bipolar disorder

*Friends Relatives Carers*

### **Meeting**

2nd Tuesday of every month  
7 - 9pm

### **Address**

Fife Bipolar Group  
The Express Group Kirkcaldy  
110 Rosslyn Street  
KY1 3AD

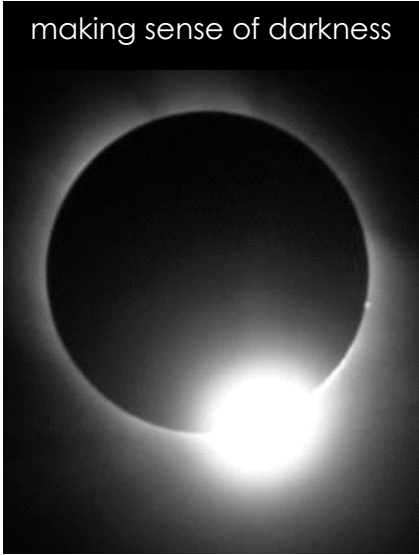
### **Contact**

fifebipolargroup@cfbg.co.uk  
www.cfbg.co.uk  
0753 863 9461

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making sense of darkness



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## Our Committee

**Chairperson** Mark

**Secretary** Pauline

**Website** James

**Magazine** Ross

**Treasurer** Barbara

**Support** Lee

**Librarian** Margaret

[fifebipolargroup@cfbg.co.uk](mailto:fifebipolargroup@cfbg.co.uk)

Get in touch with your issues and experiences and what affects your life. Let us know what you want to see in the magazine.

# Fife Boomerang Association

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Exit Community Centre,  
Glamis Centre,  
Glenrothes

01592 775650 (Between hours of 9am and 1pm, Monday to Friday) Contact: Linda Falconer

Fife Boomerang is a service for individuals between the ages of 18-65, of all abilities, who are experiencing mental health difficulties. The aims are to promote outdoor pursuits and to encourage personal growth and development through outdoor pursuits. The Association offers a seasonal programme, four times a year, of outdoor activities.

## Where is it based?

The service is based in Glenrothes but has members from Dunfermline, Kirkcaldy and Glenrothes. The venue for each activity varies, however, the association has its own minibus and so individuals will be collected and returned to a place convenient to them.

## Who can access the service?

Membership is open to anyone between the ages of 18 65 who is **referred by a Social Worker, GP, Community Psychiatric Nurse or any other Mental Healthcare Professional**. Existing members can stay beyond their 65th birthday. Most members are 30 to 50 years old. Main diagnosis must be of a mental health problem.

## How does it run?

The service is administered by support workers, but activities are planned and run by a committee which is

made up of members. Volunteers drive the minibus and assist members on and off the minibus. Activities are designed for absolute beginners and are supported by qualified instructors where relevant. Each activity normally lasts for two hours, usually in the afternoon. The days vary each week to allow more choice.

### Costs

Costs are kept low as the association is funded by a Mental Illness Specific Grant from Fife Council. Annual membership is £3.00 and the cost of activities varies from a minimum of £2.00 to a maximum of £5.00 per person.

**PS Fife**  
peersupportfife.org.uk

presents ....

scottish community foundation

*United we Stand!*

a mental health user & carer networking event

Wednesday  
14 October 2009 | 10.30am – 3.30pm

elmwood COLLEGE  
Carslogie Road  
Cupar KY15 4JB

Keynote Speaker  
Graham Morgan MBE  
Highland Users Group

**UOX**  
Voices Of Experience

**SAHELIYA**  
BME Women's Mental Health

**SAMH**  
Argyll & Clyde

**ACUMEN**

**health in mind**  
Edinburgh

**UCI**  
User & Carer Involvement  
Dumfries

**ANGUS MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION**

**Scotia Clubhouse**  
Glasgow

To book a free place contact **Chrys Muirhead**:  
Email: peersupportfife@aaf.com Tel: 01334 656341

Funded by the Scottish Community Foundation

# *Carers and supporting recovery report*



This unique report entitled 'Carers and supporting recovery' was commissioned by the Scottish Recovery Network and is the result of a long-standing project to investigate carers' perspectives of recovery and experiences supporting recovery.

From February 2009 to April 2009, SRN and Dr. Hester Parr visited four carers groups across Scotland and spoke with an estimated 60 carers about their thoughts on recovery and their experiences of caring and supporting recovery. The report findings suggest that carers can play an important role in supporting and recognising recovery and highlights some of the intensive and creative ways they have done so. It also suggests that formal services could benefit from working with carers as a means of developing better informed recovery focused relationships with the people who use their services. In addition to these points, the report highlights some of the challenges faced by carers in terms of managing risk, letting go and their own recovery.

SRN view this report as a starting point for work in this area. For instance, SRN plans to do use the information gathered from this project to influence the continued development of the Scottish Recovery Indicator (SRI). We are also considering how to share this information with a wider audience and investigating the option of creating smaller publications with particular messages

aimed at specific audiences.

We would welcome any comments or thoughts about this work and are particularly interested to hear suggestions about how this information could be disseminated or used to influence policy and practice developments. Please contact us on 0141 240 7790 or [info@scottishrecovery.net](mailto:info@scottishrecovery.net)



## *Care giving Stress*

How to tell if care giving is putting too much stress on you.

Symptoms of Caregiver Stress:

- feeling overwhelmed
- sleeping too much or too little
- gaining or losing a lot of weight
- feeling tired most of the time
- loss of interest in activities you used to enjoy
  - becoming easily irritated or angry
  - feeling constantly worried
    - often feeling sad
- frequent headaches, bodily pain, or other physical problems
- abuse of alcohol or drugs, including prescription drugs

Talk to a counsellor, psychologist, or other mental health professional right away if your stress leads you to physically or emotionally harm the person you are caring for.

# Disability Living Allowance Threat

*DLA and attendance allowance threat*



Time is running out to have your say about disability living allowance and attendance allowance being axed.

A government green paper has revealed plans to stop paying disability benefits and hand the cash over to social services instead. The consultation period for the green paper ends on 13 November. If there has been no significant outcry against the plans by then, it seems very likely that whichever party is in power after the next election will seize this opportunity to cut public spending by over a billion pounds a year. Although the actual changes may take years to be brought in, it is what happens between now and November 13th that is likely to seal the fate of attendance allowance and disability living allowance.

**27th August 2009. 21,770 people have signed since the campaign began on 6th August.**

The “*Shaping the Future of Care*” Green Paper published by the DWP and the Department of Health on 14th July sets out government plans to get rid of attendance allowance and, depending on public reaction, also leaves the way clear to end the care component of disability living allowance.

Initially, the response from many disability organisations was muted or non-existent.



This is in spite of the fact that a report in November 2008 by the Institute for Social and Economic Research warned that taking DLA and AA from claimants and making it part of a 'personal budget' administered by social services will leave millions of disabled people worse off and with less independence.

Since they have been deluged with emails from campaigners, however, most disability organisations have now realised the importance of representing their members interests on this issue. This includes the Disability Benefits Consortium, who have given an undertaking to oppose any cuts in disability benefits.

The lack of initial protest was caused at least in part by ministers deliberately choosing ambiguous terms for their plans. The green paper refers only to cutting 'disability benefits, for example Attendance Allowance'. Some organisations with predominantly younger members clearly believe that because DLA isn't specifically named, that therefore it isn't in the firing line.

But they are forgetting all the deception and weasel words that have surrounded the introduction of employment and support allowance (ESA). For example, ministers said that ESA would be paid at a higher rate than incapacity benefit. In fact, it turned out that cuts in related premiums mean that many people are very much worse off on ESA than they would have been on inca-

capacity benefits.

The reality is that if the government was intending to axe only AA it would have said so clearly, instead of deliberately and repeatedly using the term 'disability benefits' to cause uncertainty and confusion. Writing on Rightsnet, Neil Bateman, a respected welfare benefits consultant who also writes for Community Care magazine argued:

"Based on what I heard last week at the DWP Policy and Strategy Forum, both DLA and AA are in the DH's [Department of Health's] sights and DWP are closely involved in these developments."

Even Paul Treloar, until recently Disability Alliance's Director of Policy and now Head of Information at Gingerbread, wrote that:

"From what I understand at the moment, it is certainly attendance allowance that is being considered for the chop and reallocation to means-tested social care provision via local authorities - but given that the ultimate aim is to come up with a comprehensive and sustainable system of social care for all ages, it's difficult to see how DLA care component won't be similarly up for inclusion, in my opinion."

As a result, we've launched our own campaign to save these vital benefits. So, if you think that Disability living allowance and attendance allowance are benefits worth fighting for, then please fill in the boxes below.

You don't need to be a claimant – you might be a carer or support worker, for example – and you don't need to

be a subscribing member of Benefits and Work. You also don't have to send any emails if you choose not to and you can remove yourself from the list at any time you wish. And, of course, your details will never be passed on to anyone else under any circumstances (other than to [www.icontact.com](http://www.icontact.com) who manage our mailing list for us).



If we let them get away with this, if we all look the other way as one and a half million sick and disabled pensioners have their attendance allowance stolen from them and are plunged into deepest poverty, how long do you honestly think it will be before the government comes back to steal other benefits as well?

And who will you ask to speak out for you in the future, if you remain silent now, just because you don't think this affects you?

It's time to make your voice heard: sign up for the No More Benefits Cuts campaign now. If you'd like to join the campaign and find out more then go to the website written below.

**[www.benefitsandwork.co.uk/disability-living-allowance-\(dla\)/dla-aa-cuts](http://www.benefitsandwork.co.uk/disability-living-allowance-(dla)/dla-aa-cuts)**

# Stuffed Mushrooms

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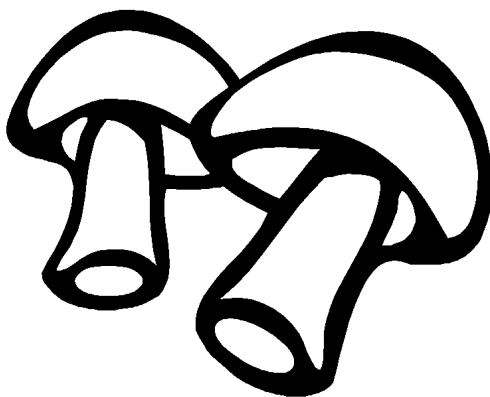
This is a simple, warm recipe for the lengthening evenings as winter draws close. This is a simple, healthy, easy to make snack that can be enjoyed any time of day or evening.

## Ingredients

- 4 large mushrooms
- 4 Rashers Bacon
- ½ cup breadcrumbs
- ½ cup cheese

## Method

1. Preheat oven to 180C.
2. Remove mushroom stalks. Cut bacon rashers into fine strips and lightly fry. Mix breadcrumbs and cheese together and add bacon.
3. Place mushrooms, top side down, on a lined baking tray. Spoon ingredients onto the mushroom and bake for 15 minutes.



# What's on in Fife?

## *Andrew Carnegie; A Man Ahead of His Time*

A man ahead of his time, his worldwide legacy is exhibited in our newly refurbished Main Hall incorporating new technology in graphic, audio-visual and touch screen displays.

Carnegie Birthplace Museum  
Moodie Street  
Dunfermline

01 Apr - 31 Oct  
11:00 to 5pm, Sundays 2pm-5pm  
Free and free visitors car park

## *The Marzee Collection*

Galerie Marzee in the Netherlands, will be celebrating its 30th anniversary over the next year and this will be billed as one of the anniversary events. The gallery is the largest known gallery in the world dedicated to innovative contemporary jewellery and its director. Portraits of eminent Fifers wearing the jewellery accompany the pieces in this exhibition.

St Andrews Museum Kinburn Park  
Doubledykes Road

12 Sep - 01 Nov  
During Museum opening hours  
Free admission

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*Come & Join ...*

## **Bipolar Fellowship Scotland**

Membership is open to anyone who has an interest in Bipolar Disorder and/or the need to increase understanding of the illness. Every new member strengthens the voice of those affected - if you have the illness, are a carer, friend, relative, a caring professional or an interested individual.

### **What membership offers:**

- The Bipolar Fellowship Scotland regular newsletter On the Level Quarterly issues of the MDF The Bipolar Organisation's UK Journal—Pendulum
- Access to a wide range of information covering all aspects of bipolar disorder/manic depression at our lending library (no need to come to the office, we can post things out to you)
- Free entry to self help groups network events
- Access to the self management training courses
- Access to facilitators' training events if you are/plan to be an organiser of a self help group
- Free entry to our annual national conference
- Legal Advice Line
- Insurance Services

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Please complete this page and send it to Bipolar Fellowship Scotland at the address below:

*I enclose my membership fee (tick as appropriate):*

Individual	0	£20.00
Unwaged Individual	0	£ 5.00
Family	0	£25.00
Corporate	0	£35.00

TOTAL ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_

NAME:

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

TEL:

E-MAIL:

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

Please make all cheques/postal orders payable to Bipolar Fellowship Scotland.

Studio 1015, Mile End Mill  
Abbey Mill Business Centre  
Seedhill Road  
Paisley PA1 1TJ

**Telephone 0141 560 2050**  
**e-mail [tildab@bipolarscotland.org.uk](mailto:tildab@bipolarscotland.org.uk)**

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**Bipolar Fellowship Scotland**  
0141 560 2050  
[www.bipolarscotland.org.uk](http://www.bipolarscotland.org.uk)

**Fife Families Support Project**  
01592 641401  
[www.fifefamilies.org.uk](http://www.fifefamilies.org.uk)

**Breathing Space Scotland**  
0141 435 3901  
Helpline 0800 83 85 87  
[breathingspacescotland.co.uk](http://breathingspacescotland.co.uk)

*Drop-in Centres around Fife*

**Barony Housing Contact Point**  
0871 700 7777  
[rowangroup.org.uk/barony.htm](http://rowangroup.org.uk/barony.htm)

**Fife Carers Centre**  
01592 642999  
[www.fifecarerscentre.org.uk](http://www.fifecarerscentre.org.uk)

**Express Group**  
01592 652975  
[Info@expressgroup.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:Info@expressgroup.fsnet.co.uk)

**Depression Alliance Scotland**  
0131 467 3050  
[www.dascot.org](http://www.dascot.org)

**Going Forth**  
01383 623179  
[Goingforth@samh.org.uk](mailto:Goingforth@samh.org.uk)

**Scottish Assoc for Mental Health**  
0141 568 7000  
[www.samh.org.uk](http://www.samh.org.uk)

**The Cottage NSF Scotland**  
01334 657421  
[thefifecottage@hotmail.com](mailto:thefifecottage@hotmail.com)

**Advocacy in Fife**  
01592 772 220  
[fife@circlesnetwork.org.uk](mailto:fife@circlesnetwork.org.uk)

**Link Living**  
01592 644048  
[www.linkliving.org.uk](http://www.linkliving.org.uk)

## *Crisis Phone lines*

**Breathing Space**  
0800 83 85 87

**Social Work out-of-hours**  
01592 415000

**Samaritans**  
08457 90 90 90

**NHS Direct**  
0845 24 24 24

**Saneline**  
0845 767 8000

**Mind**  
0845 766 0163

