

# Autumn update 2023

## 70 Years of Listening

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On the 2nd of November 1953, Samaritans founder Chad Varah answered the first ever call which would go on to become the Samaritans helpline.

To celebrate 70 Years of Listening, we held a reception at the Scottish Parliament to recognise and celebrate the amazing work of our volunteers from Shetland to Selkirk.

The evening was hosted by Paul Sweeney MSP, and included speeches from Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Mental Wellbeing, and Adrienne Rennie, a Samaritans caller.



## Rail Staff Awards

Megan Moore, who works for ScotRail, took home the Samaritans Lifesaver award at this year's Rail Staff Awards.

Megan, from North Lanarkshire, was monitoring customer queries on social media in January 2023 when she got an alarming message.

Megan used the skills learned on Samaritans' Managing Suicidal Contacts course to engage in a life-saving intervention.

Lifesaver award



## The Gathering

Members of the Samaritans Scotland staff team attended The Gathering 2023 in Edinburgh. Organised by SCVO, The Gathering is the largest free voluntary sector event in the UK.

This was a great opportunity for our team to meet up with others who work in the voluntary sector and create new working relationships for projects in 2024.



## Suicide Prevention Football Tournament

In September, footballers from across Lanarkshire laced up their boots to raise awareness about suicide prevention and support Samaritans.

Over 280 participants including local businesses, voluntary organisations, charities and groups of friends gathered for the 7-a-side football competition to raise funds.

A cheque was presented by Lord Provost Kenneth Duffy on behalf of the Lanarkshire Councils for £432 to our Executive Director, Neil Mathers.



## West Highlands & Skye Project

Samaritans pitch side banners have been placed at a number of shinty fields throughout Lochaber in the West Highlands.

As part of a joint initiative between Samaritans Scotland and local shinty clubs, the banners aim to encourage help-seeking and raise awareness that our Listening Service is available 24/7.

