

ASSETS IN ACTION:

ILLUSTRATING ASSET BASED APPROACHES FOR HEALTH IMPROVEMENT



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Research report

Introduction

Health assets and asset based working have recently come into sharper focus as being potentially important in improving population health and reducing health inequalities.

Health assets are described as the collective resources which individuals and communities have – internally, externally and collectively – which help protect against poor health and also support the development and maintenance of good health. Assets can be social, financial, physical and environmental; they are more than just the things you can put a price on. Assets are also about people, skills and opportunities. Central to assets approaches is the idea of people in control of their lives through development of their capacities and capabilities. It is thought that such control enables people to become better connected with each other and encourages a spirit of cooperation, mutual support and caring.

Asset based approaches are ways of working that promote and strengthen health assets. Assessing and building on the strengths of individuals and the assets of a community may open the door to new ways of thinking about and improving health and of responding to ill health.

The literature suggests that the assets perspective offers practical and innovative ways to impact on the positive factors that nurture health and wellbeing. It has the potential to change the way practitioners engage with individuals and the way planners design places

and services (Foot and Hopkins, 2010). Asset based working could present opportunities for dialogue between local people and staff on the basis of each having something to offer, resulting in more meaningful and appropriate services.

A number of benefits of taking an asset based approach have been proposed for individuals and communities. For those who engage, the potential benefits include more control over their lives and where they live; the ability to influence decisions which affect them and their communities; the opportunity to be engaged how and as they want to be and to be seen as part of the solution, not the problem. These proposed benefits have the potential to impact on health and health inequalities – but questions remain about what needs to happen to enable these benefits to be realised.

In Scotland it is now widely accepted that supporting good health is not the sole responsibility of the NHS – voluntary and statutory partners have a pivotal role in influencing and protecting the material, social and psychosocial determinants of health (Scottish Government, 2011). Arguably, strength and capacity can be built through agencies working together with communities as equal partners: this helps to mobilise the resources in an area, thereby protecting and promoting sustainable health and wellbeing. So, can working in this way help to create healthy, flourishing and connected communities?

A dialogue around redressing the balance between creating good health and wellbeing and identifying risk, preventing illness and reducing premature death is

emerging (Foot, 2012). Whilst there is a growing body of evidence relating to health assets, there are also gaps in this evidence base. Questions about why and how to adopt asset based working, and appropriate methods to measure and evaluate such approaches, remain unanswered in the literature (GCPH, 2012).

This piece of research profiles the work of 19 projects with the aim of illustrating how asset based approaches are currently being applied in Scotland.

The case studies of these projects highlight the key characteristics of asset based working and demonstrate the strengths and challenges of the approach for individuals, the wider community and project staff. This research also provides a valuable insight into the practical experiences of those working most closely with communities in an asset based fashion. Lastly, this report presents points of learning and policy implications for the future development of asset based working in Scotland.

The Glasgow Centre for Population Health has produced two briefing papers on the subject of asset based approaches, both of which are available on the GCPH website – www.gcph.co.uk.

Aims and objectives

Building on a review of the available evidence (GCPH, 2011) and utilising a case study methodology, this piece of research was designed to focus on asset based approaches in action.

The purpose was to better understand how individual and community assets are being realised and enhanced in real life settings.

The aim of this study was *“to illustrate asset based approaches for health improvement in action by producing a set of case studies based on projects, services or initiatives that have taken such an approach”*.

Specifically the research aimed to:

- Explore, within each case study, whether and how the principles underpinning asset based approaches have been applied.
- Highlight, as part of each case study, the strengths and positive outcomes of the approach taken as well as aspects which have proven challenging.
- Assess each case for evidence to suggest that asset based approaches are improving health and reducing health inequalities in Scotland.
- Synthesise the learning across the case studies to draw out transferable lessons regarding asset based working.
- Identify policy implications and make recommendations for the future development of asset based approaches for health improvement.
- Produce a range of outputs that are accessible to policy makers, practitioners and researchers on how asset based approaches for health improvement can be applied in Scotland.



Methodology

This piece of research is an exploratory case study investigation involving multiple cases and based on qualitative methods.

The research element of this study was carried out from October 2011 to February 2012. A total of 19 individual cases were studied and the full case studies are presented in Section 2 of this report. The research methodology is set out below.

Why case studies?

Case studies are used to answer 'how' or 'why' questions (Yin, 2009). They allow the exploration and understanding of complex issues, such as health improvement and health inequalities, and are considered to be a robust research method when a holistic, in-depth investigation is required (Zainal, 2007).

Crucially, case studies permit the exploration of phenomena within their real life context when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2004). Case studies allow a unique story to be told (Neale et al., 2006).

Study protocol

The case study protocol (Appendix A) sets out the research methods. The research was designed to ensure that the data collected addressed the original objectives of the study via a conceptual framework and action plan for getting from questions to conclusions (Stake, 1995).

Research ethics

Prior to commencing the research, GCPH liaised with the West of Scotland Research Ethics Service and established that there was no requirement for ethical review for this study. Informed consent was sought from all study participants prior to interview.

Case selection

Individual projects were drawn from across Scotland. The projects and initiatives studied worked with various audiences and focused on different topics/interest areas. Taking a purposive sampling approach¹, identification of potential cases was supported by the BIG Lottery, the Scottish Community Development Centre, Equally Well and Community Health Exchange (CHEX).

Further projects were identified by colleague recommendation and by online searching.

Initial contact was made with each project in writing. Following their agreement to participate, the researchers carried out a preliminary assessment to establish whether the work of the project was underpinned by asset based principles (see Appendix B). If a project was assessed as demonstrating asset based working (to some degree), the project was selected as a case and included in the research.

Initial contact was made with 35 projects to yield the final 19 cases. Of the 35, 14 were ruled out as cases: four were found to be services, rather than projects; one was very similar in nature to a project which had already been selected as a case, two were focused on the

¹ A purposive sample is a non-representative subset of a larger population, and is constructed to serve a very specific need or purpose.

development and delivery of a physical community asset, and nine did not respond to the researchers' invitations or were unable to participate due to capacity or timing issues.

Data collection

This study comprised three key data collection approaches:

1. *documentary analysis* of key project related documents;
2. *semi-structured interviews* with project staff and participants to provide additional detail and context, and to clarify information from the documentary analysis stage; and
3. *observation* of projects in action where possible and deemed necessary, to assist in the information gathering process.

Firstly, a wide ranging desk-based review of existing project specific documentation was carried out. The documentation varied by project and included:

- applications for external funding, end of year reports, funding assessments forms and final reports;
- evaluation reports, both internal and externally commissioned;
- project plans, summary information and participant handbooks;
- specific project related information including newsletters, briefing

papers, media coverage, and website information.

Secondly, interviews were undertaken with staff and participants of all projects. A total of 57 interviews were carried out across the 19 case studies: 31 with project staff and 26 with project participants.

Interviews were semi-structured and offered the opportunity for interviewees to reflect on and share their experiences of involvement with the project, as well as their views on the strengths and challenges of the approach taken. Staff and participant interview topic guides are presented in Appendix C. Interviews were facilitated by two researchers, one of whom carried out the interview as the other took written notes. Following each interview both researchers reviewed and finalised the interview note in order to improve reliability.

Finally, the study methodology included project observation. However, no formal project observation was required. All cases engaged well with the research and openly shared key documents with the researchers. Staff and participants agreed to be interviewed and freely discussed their experiences.

On a number of occasions, the researchers were walked around the project premises by the staff which allowed observation of the project in action on an informal basis, but no data was gathered in this way.

Data analysis

Following data collection, the researchers carried out a case-by-case and cross-case analysis of the data.

A case study analysis framework (Appendix B) was constructed to facilitate collation of data from a range of sources into one central working document, thereby aiding the analysis process.

Specifically, the framework was used to: classify the data into meaningful categories; rearrange the data into a more manageable form; and develop and verify patterns, relationships and issues from the data.

Analysis was carried out within case initially and, subsequently, a thematic across-case analysis was undertaken to synthesise the learning. Analysis was supported by use of Atlas.ti software.

Identification

All projects gave permission to be named within the report and have reviewed and approved their own case study for factual accuracy. Quotations have been used to illustrate points within the Findings section of this report and have not been attributed to specific projects but by the speakers relationship to the project i.e. staff or participant. Within each case study (Section 2) individual quotes are presented and are related directly to the work of that project but are not attributed to specific individuals.

Limitations

This study represents an initial attempt to illustrate asset based working in action and to characterise the features of asset based approaches in a Scottish context.

The report presents and discusses the work of a small number of projects and initiatives in Scotland. The researchers fully acknowledge that there are many

projects carrying out asset based work in Scotland which this research did not include.

Based on a purposive sampling approach, projects were identified through existing contacts and establishments and by colleague recommendation – approaches which potentially restricted the variety of projects included.

The project participants interviewed were identified by the project staff. All spoke highly of the project they had been engaged with. The researchers did not have the opportunity to speak with individuals whose experience of the project had perhaps been less successful.

Finally, asset based working in a service setting was not included in this research. The researchers focused on project work alone as it was felt to be methodologically unsound to compare projects and services within a single study. Further research is required to look specifically at how asset based approaches are being taken by public services in a Scottish context.

Table 1 Descriptive overview of cases

Project	Location	Key activity
Routes Out of Prison (Roop)	Scotland wide	Peer mentoring
Columba 1400's YPLA	Loch Lomond and Isle Skye	Leadership academy
The Coach House Trust	Glasgow (North West)	Horticulture and traditional crafts
Templehall Dads' Group	Kirkcaldy, Fife	Gardening (principally)
Older People for Older People (O4O)	Highlands	Social enterprise and community support
Gorbals Recycles	Glasgow (South)	Recycling
The Zone's Home Buddy Scheme	Dalmellington, East Ayrshire	Home support
GalGael Navigate Life Programme	Glasgow (South)	Traditional skills
StobsWELLbeing	Dundee	Mental wellbeing
Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust	Cambuslang and Rutherglen	General health and wellbeing
Urban Roots	Glasgow (South)	Environmental protection
Bute Produce	Isle of Bute	Growing food
Playbusters' Connecting Generations Project	Glasgow (East)	Making intergenerational connections
Fair Isle Primary School 's Opportunities for All	Kirkcaldy, Fife	Family relationships and community connections
The Big ShoutER	East Renfrewshire	Youth services involvement
218	Glasgow (City)	Criminal justice
Castlemilk Timebank	Glasgow (South East)	Timebanking (exchanging skills)
Rag Tag 'n' Textile	Highland (Skye & Wester Ross)	Crafts
Fab Pad	Scotland wide	Homemaking

Target group	Scale
Short-term sentenced offenders on release	Over 1,000 direct beneficiaries per year; 22 staff
Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and leaving care	130 direct of beneficiaries per year
Adults with poor mental health and furthest removed from labour market	80-85 direct beneficiaries per year; 19 staff
Young dads	25 direct beneficiaries; 1 part time dedicated staff member
Older people	70 - 200 direct beneficiaries; 1 staff
Population approach	20 volunteers at any one time; 11 staff
Older and vulnerable people	32 direct beneficiaries currently; 4 home buddies
Unemployed (and vulnerable) adults	90-100 direct beneficiaries per year; 8 staff and 15-20 volunteers
Population approach	Aimed at population of 10,000
Population approach	Aimed at population of 57,000; 180 volunteers
Population approach	50 volunteers; 4 staff
Population approach	3 trainees, 2 staff
Older people and young people	180 direct beneficiaries per year; 25 staff
Families	79 direct beneficiaries per year; 6 staff
Young people	5 direct beneficiaries; 2 staff
Female offenders and ex-offenders	500-600 direct beneficiaries/year; 25 staff
Population approach	250 members; 1 staff
Adults with mental health issues	60 direct beneficiaries/year; 8 staff
Young people with history of, risk of, homelessness, who have new tenancy	600 direct beneficiaries/year across all projects; 14 staff

Findings

This chapter presents the key findings of the research. The findings reflect the activities, experiences, and learning arising across all of the 19 cases studied. The cases were drawn from across Scotland and have a diverse range of target audiences, are based on a wide range of topic related activities and areas of interest, and vary in scale and reach. Five themes have been identified: 'balancing'; 'connecting'; 'learning and earning'; 'empowering'; and 'being human'.

1. Balancing

A continuum

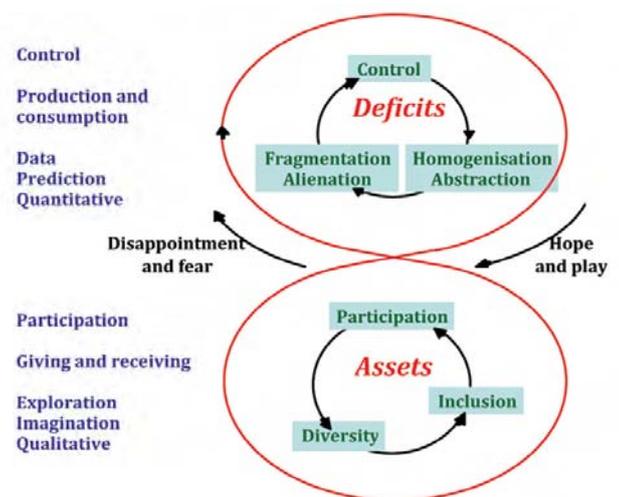
All nineteen cases (Table 1) were judged, by the researchers, to demonstrate some, or all, of the characteristics underpinning an assets based approach (see Appendix B). However, commonalities and differences in the way the cases worked were evident. Thus, the researchers identified a continuum of approach within asset based working. And, perhaps surprisingly, need featured strongly.

While all of the cases studied were assets based, all were also responding to need - the projects were taking an asset based approach to delivering needs based initiatives, either in response to an individual need or a recognised community need. Participants became involved in these projects initially because of an identified need but thereafter were worked with in a collaborative and assets driven way.

An important finding from this research,

therefore, is that taking an asset based approach is not an alternative to addressing need. In practice, there is not a simple and clear division between deficit based approaches and asset based approaches. Rather, we found that in the projects studied, deficits are being addressed using a different model of working which develops strengths and resources rather than perpetuating need.

Figure 1
Relationship between type of approach and outcome



Adapted with permission from the International Futures Forum.²

Figure 1 demonstrates the relationship between type of approach and likely outcome. A deficit-driven approach may perpetuate need and create a cycle of dependency over an individual. Developing personal assets is made difficult in this environment.

Asset based working that is rooted in participative approaches, however, may

² See <http://www.internationalfuturesforum.com/>

be more likely to generate strength allowing further assets to be developed, and sparking a more positive cycle of change. These cycles do not describe different worlds but different aspects of the current world.

The cases also served to highlight the importance of the nature of need. A distinction was evident (particularly in those cases involving craft activity) between the need for and the need to.

For example, one case was based on the notion that people have an inner need to be creative and an outer need for a living wage. Other examples include recognising individuals' need to connect with others, to have a sense of purpose and belonging and to contribute or 'give back' to their community. Responding to individual and community need to came through strongly in many of the cases studied.

Planned flexibility: engagement

A flexible approach to the engagement of participants was taken by almost all of the cases studied. Referral pathways were many and varied ("*...referrals come from many different sources*") and self referral emerged strongly as an engagement mechanism. In terms of the duration of participants' engagement, almost all cases had some freedom to allow participants to stay with the project for as long as they wished.

"There's no limit on the time each person is engaged for but most people move on after two to three years."

(Staff)

For a small number of cases, the initial stage of project engagement was fixed

e.g. a twelve week programme, but continued participation was possible through alternative means, organised or otherwise.

"Completion of the programme qualifies them [participants] to a 'package of benefits' including continued support and allows past participants to play a peer support role for newer intakes."

(Staff)

"The average time a client stays with the project is thirteen weeks. However the client and [staff member] often form relationships and the line between [engagement with the project] and becoming friends can be blurry."

(Staff)

Those cases without limitations on engagement duration expressed a degree of difficulty. Whilst it was recognised that some participants require longer term support than others, the propensity of project participants to become dependent was very real and prevented new participants (with, arguably, more potential to benefit) from accessing a place.

"The project doesn't know how to let go."

(Staff)

"Some people don't want to move on to something else to free up room for someone else."

(Staff)

Planned flexibility: structure

In terms of how the projects organised themselves, the cases demonstrated that it is possible to work in an asset based fashion while running a well planned and

organised project. The research found that balancing a degree of structure on the one hand with participant led flexible and responsive working on the other, created ownership for the participant and, at the same time, the project remained manageable for the staff. This model of adaptable working was evident within all of the cases studied.

Structure was also seen by most cases to be important for their client group in instilling notions of planning, purpose and routine as an antidote to otherwise chaotic lifestyles.

“[The project] is not formulaic but the project structure is set and strong. The structure balances out the person centred nature of the approach that is reactive and makes the project deliverable.”

(Staff)

“Some struggle with the structure at first but then get used to it and even enjoy having routine.”

(Participant)

The growth trade-off

Continuing the theme of ‘balancing’, the

research uncovered a perceived trade-off to be made between opportunity and integrity.

In a large proportion of the cases studied, staff expressed some kind of frustration at their own limitations – they would like to do more but capacity and resources made this difficult.

“There’s so much more we could do if we were just endorsed to do it. We see the missed opportunities and each missed opportunity is a wasted life.”

(Staff)

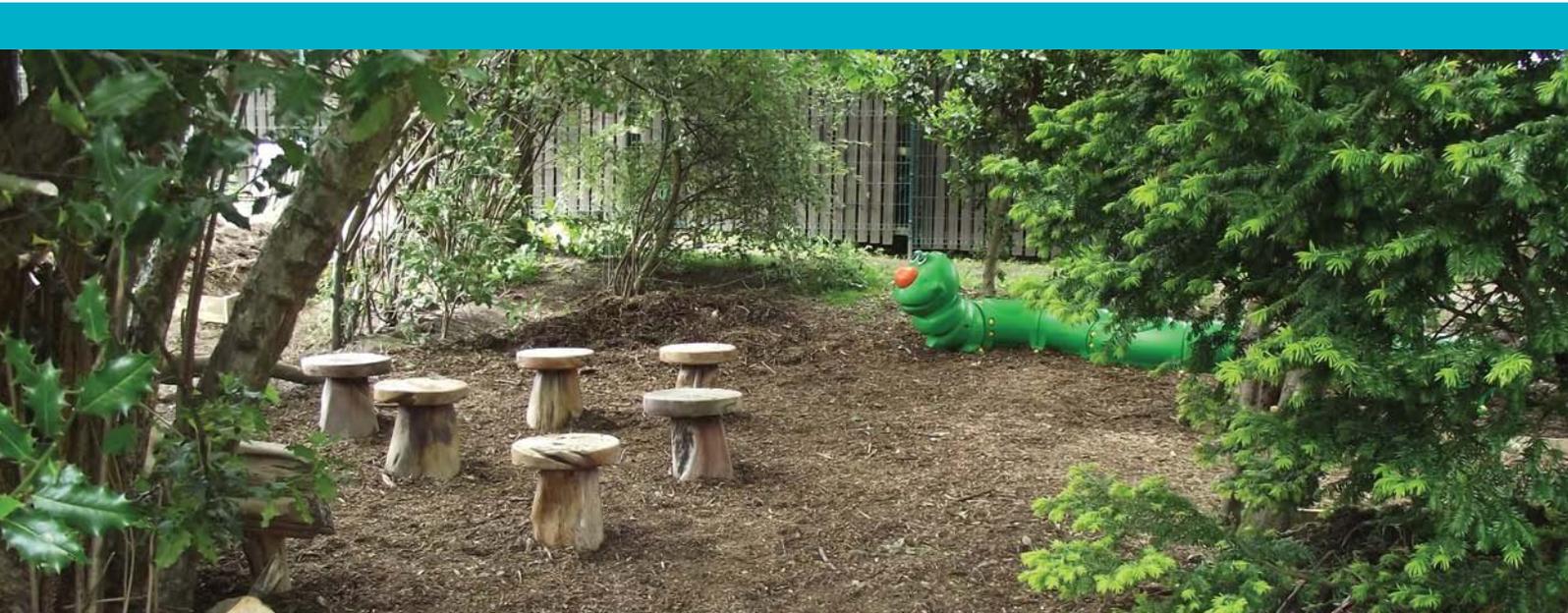
“It’s difficult knowing that there are people that need your help but you can’t reach them.”

(Staff)

Further, for some, there were fears that capitalising on any opportunity to expand would endanger the very local, face-to-face nature of the project and lead to the loss of project integrity in terms of what made it work.

“We’re trying to consolidate operation of the project to become more professional without limiting the [project’s] capacity to offer effective peer support.”

(Staff)



2. Connecting

Boundary spanning

Around half of the cases studied reflected positively on their boundary spanning role – i.e. their primary responsibilities are not rooted within one organisation or sector but span across many. One staff member described herself as *“the credible outsider”*.

“We’re not from the council or the NHS. Consultation from these organisations is usually because something is looming. We’re agenda free and neutral.”

(Staff)

Most cases were driven by one central person who spoke of their commitment to the project and the rewarding nature of their role. For this person, the boundaries of their work responsibilities and personal involvement were often blurred.

“I’ll turn my hand to anything to help other people.”

(Staff)

“I haven’t slept well in seven years! It’s not just a job.”

(Staff)

“It’s just become my life.”

(Staff)

Another boundary observed in the research exists within the lives and behaviours of participants. This boundary can be described as the initial separation of an individual’s behaviours when participating within the project and how they live their lives within the wider community and their private life. These two realms were described by

one case as *“parallel tracks”*. It is the subsequent intersection of these tracks that emerged as an important point within the individual’s journey; where the work of the project meets and begins to influence how the participant thinks, feels and acts outside of the project. It would seem that, for many of the cases studied, success comes from the ‘spilling over’ of the positive influence achieved within the project environment into the broader public and private life of each participant.

Collaborative working

Evidence of building social capital³ was seen in all cases. Development of both bonding capital (linking people similar to each other) and bridging capital (linking between different types of people) was apparent.⁴

Bridging activity was seen in cases aiming to connect with marginalised or excluded individuals, or to break down cultural barriers, and also in attempts to link people to other initiatives or services, including statutory public services.

“The project builds new relationships and friendships... and by doing so creates stronger communities and greater cohesion between generations.”

(Staff)

“...helps [people] who may feel isolated to recognise and access the range of networks and supports available around them.”

(Staff)

In terms of bonding, several of the cases studied had a focus on connecting participants to their own local communities and creating a sense of belonging.

³ Social capital is about the value of social networks, bonding similar people and bridging between diverse people, with norms of reciprocity. <http://www.socialcapitalresearch.com/definition.html>

⁴ See GCPH Finding Series Briefing Paper 34. GCPH 2012.

"... 'rootlessness' is part of the experience of many participants."

(Staff)

Also, one of the key purposes of many of the projects was connecting like-minded people – this is discussed further under the heading 'shared experience' below.

"Common culture divides people. We bring them back together."

(Staff)

Language around connecting, linking and relationship building was dominant across all cases. Both personal and organisational collaboration featured strongly. It is noteworthy that sustainability emerged as a central issue – collaborating was viewed to be crucial as a precursor for change for a different future.

"Many participants feel they are improving their neighbourhoods in general terms for the common good, by building links of reciprocity and trust."

(Staff)

"It's largely about realising assets and resources and working to provide the skills to enhance and further develop in order to gain life skills to make sustainable improvements in their lives and lives of others within their communities."

(Staff)

"...allow them to take back control of their lives, determine what is important to them and develop skills to utilise and enhance their resources for the future."

(Staff)

Importantly, whilst many of the cases were rooted in the voluntary sector, all

of the cases studied were working alongside numerous other projects, initiatives and/or services, including statutory public services – the asset based approaches being taken were largely dependent on collaboration across services and sectors.

"There's a strong ethic of partnership working...By engaging in local networks, we can ensure appropriate partnerships are formed to provide the full set of services and joined up interventions participants require to progress."

(Staff)

"Everything we do connects."

(Staff)

Shared experience of involvement

Linked closely to collaborative working, the research highlighted the importance of shared experiences in the cases studied.

Many of the cases were premised on 'working with' rather than 'doing to' the participants, through facilitating a process of which the participant felt a degree of ownership. Importance was placed on the value of the experience for both the participant and the staff in many cases.

"We're not here to do it for people – it's equity in approach and mutual in support."

(Staff)

"Participants and support staff take part in the programme alongside each other to build a new quality of relationship based on mutual trust and respect."

(Staff)

Peer support played an important part of many of the cases. For some this was made possible by allowing participants who had been involved in the project for a considerable period to assist others.

“The project is run on a rolling programme so new participants can join in any week and this allows the people who have been involved for some time to help out those who are new.”

(Staff)

In other cases, peer support was more structured – support staff were employed on the basis that they had a personal understanding of the project participants’ situation and the ability to demonstrate what a positive future could look like.

“The history and life experiences of the [staff] makes them credible.”

(Staff)

In a small number of cases, these staff had progressed through the project that they subsequently worked or volunteered for.

“Because the same things happened to me as them I understand them better than if I’d learned just from reading about it.”

(Participant)

In general, a strong sense of working together for the common good was clear with recognition that collaboration was necessary to generate benefits for individuals, the wider community and society as a whole.

“We’re like a big pot of soup: together we are greater than all of us individually.”

(Staff)



3. Learning and earning

The business of being 'asset based'

The research found economic issues to be a major challenge to asset based working: funding was discussed in negative terms by almost all of the cases studied. External funding was relied upon by the cases to enable their work, and there were inherent constraints around its short term nature – a culture of uncertainty, difficulty in future planning, and imposed deadlines.

"Our work needs long term vision and consistency. Short term funding makes it very difficult to plan ahead."

(Staff)

"It can be difficult to stick to your principles when you're working with people who cannot necessarily meet the expectations and deadlines imposed by funders."

(Staff)

Alongside these constraints, the tendency for funding themes to change over time meant some cases had diverted their focus from doing something they had found to work well in order to meet the requirements of a new funding stream. This was described by one case as *"fighting for survival"*.

Projects taking a wider, population approach had an added difficulty as pots of funding tended to be set aside for work targeted at specific population groups based on need. One case reported that they *"...had to be creative"* to overcome this.

"Funding is an uncertainty I could do without."

(Staff)

"Funding has been, and probably always will be, a struggle."

(Staff)

Further, due to the small scale of most cases, the staff time required to apply for funding was associated with time lost to project delivery.

Paradoxically, whilst working through difficulties in accessing funding themselves, a number of cases spoke of their economic value in terms of filling gaps and covering cracks in the provision of statutory public services. Such services may have been scaled back, were inadequate to meet demand, or no statutory service was in place.

A number of the projects studied were able to provide (largely anecdotal) evidence that they had been responsible for breaking repeat cycles that are costly to public services including offending, addictions and mental ill health. Participants were emphatic in speaking of the difference the projects had made to their lives, and in particular to their confidence and self esteem, as well as to their health.

"I'm off alcohol and I've cut down my anti-depressants since I came here."

I'm glad I came."

(Participant)

"It doesn't give you skills – they're already there but you've been knocked down by a harsh life."

(Participant)

The current economic climate was also linked to restrictions in terms of the amount and types of funding available to projects. Following the financial downturn, external agencies were perceived to be diverting their attention inwards.

As a result, external support (in numeracy, literacy, legal and financial issues, advocacy) for projects was felt to be scarce. Challenges were also faced in securing employment opportunities for participants.

Financial sustainability

A small number of the cases had an income generating mechanism or mechanisms, both to alleviate the short term issues around funding and to support long term sustainability of the approach.

Social enterprise, such as selling second hand goods or locally grown produce, emerged as a common financial support system across the cases. Notably, none of the nineteen cases were fully self sufficient however, and all relied on external funding to some degree.

It was not only funding that arose as being important for project sustainability, but also people. Linking back to an earlier point, the cases were largely driven by and centred around one committed individual. This raises questions about the future of such projects should this person move on.

Worth

Assisting participants into training, education or employment was one of the aims in almost all of the cases.

“One of the main aims of the project is to assist [volunteers] in becoming ‘work ready’ and to have the confidence to apply for a job.”

(Staff)

“It gives people with extremely limited work experience or community connections a place of work within a context of a supportive community.”

(Staff)

Importantly, most cases recognised that, for their participants, employment was “...*the holy grail*” – a long term goal for most, and something that was not desired by or accessible to all. Across all cases, the worth of the project and the value of those participating in it, were viewed as greater than the goal of securing training or employment. Within the project environment, participants were able to regain confidence; enhance existing skills and build new ones; and gain (workplace) experience – which, for some, helped them return to or enter employment or take up new opportunities for training and further education.

Helping participants to “... *go back to life with much better attitudes following support*” from the project was seen to be of greater value than securing them a job that they may not be ready for.

Volunteering also emerged as a common mechanism for participants to demonstrate their worth to themselves and their community, and is discussed further under ‘giving back’, below.

Experiential learning

A strong focus on doing rather than measuring was evident. In almost all

cases, some form of monitoring was in place and the data gathered was reported back to the appropriate funding body/bodies.

“We’ve had to provide regular feedback to satisfy our funders.”
(Staff)

“Different outcomes need to be reported to our different funders.”
(Staff)

Monitoring was found to be largely quantitative in nature (e.g. numbers passing through the project) with softer data being perceived as more difficult to capture and report on.

“Real difference is hard to measure – it’s about the quality of life experience of participants.”
(Staff)

For most, however, the benefit of the project work was felt to be clear from the

lived experience of working in the project and through anecdotal feedback from participants.

A minority of the cases had links to organisations that were tasked with carrying out more formal evaluative work for them. Most projects felt that they lacked the skills and / or capacity to carry out a robust evaluation of their own work. Some were explicit about their desire to improve their monitoring and evaluation systems.

“I’m kicking myself that I didn’t keep better records of what all the volunteers went on to do. It’s all in here [my head].”
(Staff)

Reflexive practice was evident however. Most cases had, in some way, considered what had worked and why, and taken steps to build on this and do more of it. This was not always a formal or planned process. Often, the aims and approach



remained over time with changes made based on experiential learning and intuitive action.

“[We’ve] continued to provide fundamentally the same service as was originally designed. There have however been changes to the structure and organisation of the programmes delivered, the management of the service, the roles and responsibilities of staff, the duration of engagement permitted, the gathering and use of data held... and so on.”

(Staff)

“The [project] staff have not invented something and rolled it out – it has come from reflexive practice – looking at what worked and why and building on this.”

(Staff)

“Some of the most valuable outcomes have been unintended.”

(Staff)

This point on projects evolving on the basis of experience, related to an earlier discussion on flexible working, may be viewed as a strength but where this ad hoc approach replaces planned monitoring and evaluation, it may also be construed as a weakness.

A small minority of cases had investigated social return on investment (SROI) analysis as a vehicle for demonstrating their worth in economic terms. The SROI analysis reported very favourably on these cases and is perhaps a useful tool, worthy of wider consideration in this regard, being mindful of the limitations inherent in placing a monetary value on human experience.

4. Empowering

Whose assets?

A strong theme which was evident across the cases was that of supporting, enabling and empowering participants to realise their personal potential and capacity for responsibility. One project described what they offered as a *“set of opportunities and supports that act together to minimise or eliminate the barriers to full inclusion in the community or society”*.

“We empower people by providing opportunities and choices to allow them to make positive changes in their lives.”

(Staff)

Stories about success in these regards were ubiquitous from staff and participants. Participants spoke of having increased confidence and skills to cope with changes and difficulties in their lives.

These stories were further supported by the personal benefit gained from volunteering and peer support opportunities, as discussed in relation to ‘giving back’, below.

“It’s a big achievement to get better and to be able to help other people.”

(Participant)

“.....stability and new opportunities for people who’ve faced difficult times.”

(Staff)

It was seen as crucial that participant empowerment and confidence building was achieved without participants becoming overly attached to the project.

“We want to build confidence rather than become a crutch.”

(Staff)

“Some participants develop a dependency with the project after their placement – some have threatened to chain themselves to the work bench!”

(Staff)

Aspiration

Project staff expressed a strong belief that participant journeys should be participant-led, with recognition that the end point will be different for each participant. It was widely accepted that project engagement may not resolve all of the issues faced by participants but instead represents the start of what, for some, may be a much longer journey.

“We emphasise that [the project] is only the start. No one is fixed in six months from an [issue] that has gone on for many years.”

(Staff)

However, for most cases, an important aspect of project involvement was

supporting participants to develop aspirations for the future and providing the grounding to allow individuals to realise these goals for themselves.

Language around broadening horizons, breaking down barriers and future possibility was common in both the project documentation and in staff interviews.

“We help open up possibilities.”

(Staff)

“It’s a transformational change project about transforming lives and aspirations.”

(Staff)

“It’s about changing self talk at a personal and community level.”

(Staff)

One project emphasised “...developing a sense of belonging, positive forms of identity and instilling positive values” as important precursors to transformational change. Several project participants also spoke of the importance of being supported to plan for a better future.



“If someone believes in you then you can believe in yourself.”

(Participant)

Some of the projects incorporated a personal action or development planning stage. Co-producing such a plan helped to ensure that project support was forward looking and that each participant had a sense of ownership of the plan. Reviewing progress was found to provide a meaningful and motivational opportunity to help participants to visualise their own progress and journey.

“We continually set agreed goals that can be achieved until the client gets to the stage that they don’t look back.”

(Staff)

Choice

At the level of the individual, projects were found to be adaptable and responsive to the interests and wishes of each individual participant – *“... participation at the participant’s pace”*. Against a backdrop of tailored activities (e.g. recycling, horticulture and gardening, traditional crafts, and fun family orientated activities), participants spoke of gaining new tangible skills and developing softer personal skills. Confidence building, a sense of purpose, and building supportive relationships were intrinsic to all project activities.

“[The project] provides a creative atmosphere in which people teach and share traditional skills.”

(Participant)

Participants were seen to be *“individuals with choices”* and were, in many cases, offered a diverse range of opportunities and involvement mechanisms.

5. Being human

Honesty and humanity

Upholding notions of honesty and humanity came through strongly in the research as central tenets of an asset based way of working.

In terms of humanity, one case was said *“to work with people in a more human way compared to big services”*. Staff demonstrated strongly their belief in working with participants as equals.

“I believe you should treat clients with the respect you would expect your grandparents to be treated.”

(Participant)

The research showed asset based working to be rooted in mutually caring and supportive environments. Staff felt valued (*“...more than just part of a process”*) and the projects strived to *“treat people as people, not as numbers”*.

Turning to honesty, staff and participants commonly held a belief that statutory services, at times, promised a level of help and support that was subsequently not upheld.

“Many promises have been made to me and not kept; [the project] does not make promises it can’t keep.”

(Participant)

“[We] do not promise that someone will get to where they were before they became unwell.”

(Staff)

Personal commitment and emotional attachment to the work came through clearly in interviews with staff. The

rewarding nature of the work – being part of the ‘journey’ that participants take during their time with the projects – was a recurring reflection for staff.

“I like knowing that this project is helping people.”
(Staff)

“It’s rewarding to see the change in people who were once written off becoming well again”.
(Staff)

“It was a real honour to work with these people who worked so hard for their communities.”
(Staff)

Participants, in many cases, also spoke with strong emotion about their project involvement.

“My whole life has benefited every which way.”
(Participant)

“If this wasn’t here I don’t know where I’d be. It’s given me a real boost.”
(Participant)

“It gives you something to wake up for.”
(Participant)

Married to such emotional involvement for staff, was personal disappointment when a participant failed to progress or to recognise their own potential.

“It can be emotionally draining for the staff.”
(Staff)

Motivation

The majority of the cases studied had

grown organically from a recognised individual or community need or issue and had been taken forward initially by a community group or members.

“It [the project] was originally set up to address lack of safe play areas for children and young people in [area], and in response to local need [project] was set up and continues to develop.”
(Staff)

“It [the project] was founded by three local people with a shared desire to improve the area.”
(Staff)

“Came about when young service users from [area] expressed an interest in having more of a say in the delivery of youth health services.”
(Staff)

Some started small and developed over time in response to growing recognition and reach of their work.

“...the local people who ran it were full of ideas but lacking in time, energy and resources.”
(Staff)

“It developed over time due to local demand and the range of people involved and developing skills of individuals taking the project in different directions.”
(Staff)

Others diversified in response to changing funding streams as discussed previously (“...had to be creative”). A small number of cases were established in response to government level policy priorities. Two of the cases worked at a national level. Changes had also been made to the delivery of the projects

over time in response to monitoring, evaluation and learning from experience.

People, rather than issues

The majority of the cases evidenced a focus on the abilities of their participants rather than centralising their illness or other issues – *“diagnosis is left at the door”*.

“Each participant is known as a person, not a condition.”
(Staff)

The combination of a practical activity to progress and a social network to engage with was adopted by many of the projects to *“...shift the focus from the individual and their issues and onto the creative task they are engaged with”*. Whilst this diversionary approach was clear in craft based projects, it was also utilised in other projects – concentrating on positive achievement diverted attention away from the enormity of more intractable issues.

It is important to be clear that this way of working was not found to be about ignoring the issues but rather to help participants to develop skills and confidence, and to have new experiences centred on achievement. Applying this learning to deeper rooted issues was seen to be part of the process with practical work as a medium for facilitating other activity. One project described this way of working as *“...progression rather than diversion”*.

“[Practical] projects provide a practical focus, while other changes get to work on a personal level.”
(Staff)

“Participants become well through displacement activity and distraction and beginning to plan for tomorrow.”
(Staff)

Giving back

Participant involvement in the projects studied was found to be cyclical in nature in many cases. Participants were found to value opportunities to support a project which had helped them – to *“give something back”* – and to continue their involvement on a less formal basis. Volunteering was a common mechanism, as was offering peer support to new project participants, linked to the empowerment of individuals and through a shared experience of involvement as previously discussed.

“I wanted to be able to help somebody else feel better. It’s nice to give something back.”
(Participant)

Volunteering played an important and valued part in the majority of the cases, with projects offering different ways for individuals to volunteer their time, skills and energy.

“[The project] takes a flexible approach and people can volunteer as and when they can and as required – we don’t need to tie them down to set hours.”
(Staff)

“The positive energy and enthusiasm that transpires from the volunteers is inspiring and encouraging not only to new volunteer team members but to their friends, families, the local community and most importantly themselves.”
(Staff)

Many benefits of volunteering were also highlighted in the research, both at the individual and community level, described in one case as the *"...multiple benefits of the volunteering ethos"*. Such benefits included a sense of purpose and structure, improved (family) relationships, social interaction, community cohesion and also access to training opportunities.

Notably, none of the individuals interviewed described themselves in formal terms as 'a volunteer', preferring to view their contribution more informally as 'helping out' or 'supporting'.

Collective action

Lastly, linked to earlier points about flexibility and boundary spanning, the person-centred and flexible approach

taken by the cases studied *"allowed enthusiastic staff to, on occasion, work out with their traditional roles and remit to help take the [project] forward"*. Effective partnership working, information sharing and the *"right staff with the right frame of mind all working well together"* were seen to be key ingredients of successful staffing of projects working in an asset based way.

"The staff have common goals and aspirations – there's camaraderie."
(Staff)

In relation to the future development of asset based working within Scotland, one case stated clearly:

"It's about people doing things differently; it doesn't take more people to do it."
(Staff)



Discussion

This final chapter discusses the findings arising from the research and their implications for the future development of asset based approaches in a Scottish context. As set out in the previous section, five main themes emerged from the research:

- Balancing;
- Connecting;
- Learning and earning;
- Empowering; and
- Being human.

Cutting across all themes, an overwhelming sense of positivity around and support for asset based approaches for health improvement was captured by the research. Both staff and participants spoke enthusiastically of transformational change and betterment; negativity was sparse. The lived experience of asset based working within the 19 cases studied demonstrated, through anecdotal evidence, the realisation of much of what the literature suggests these approaches can offer.

Balancing

In terms of balance, the case studies raise questions about how projects and initiatives, and indeed statutory services, might offer greater flexibility in how they are delivered to become more participant-led whilst recognising that some parameters remain fixed. This research would suggest that planned and structured working and asset based approaches are not incompatible. Being mindful both of the literature around

what asset based approaches can offer and of the limitations to the reach of statutory public services, there is considerable potential to be gained from a move towards asset based working. Carefully handled, tipping the balance of advocacy, emphasis and investment from deficit based working towards more asset based approaches could make space for greater human agency in a manner complementary to established understandings of/action to address wider societal and structural influences on quality of life. Fundamentally, this shift will stem from a change in attitudes and values.

Connecting

Both the research literature and the findings from this study highlight 'building connections' as a fundamental principle of asset based working. Our research reinforces the importance of making and sustaining supportive connections between people and across organisations to maximise capacity, skills, knowledge and, crucially, a sense of the common good, to bring about positive change. The value of sharing experience and learning and the benefits gained from 'giving back' were evident and multiple. Effective collaboration with other projects and services to ensure continuity for project participants emerged as an important factor. The contribution of projects in supporting and complementing mainstream service delivery was shown to be valuable, both in terms of human and financial gain.

Learning and earning

In terms of the health impact of asset based working, this research sought to uncover evidence that asset based

approaches are improving health and reducing health inequalities in a Scottish context. Anecdotally, the cases studied were making a difference to (and, in some cases, have transformed) the lives of participants, their families and local communities. Some funding bodies provide business planning and evaluation support to the projects they fund and evidence of extensive monitoring was clear (i.e. observing and recording). However, few projects had systematic evaluation and measurement plans in place (i.e. assessing the significance, worth or quality of their work) and thus little hard evidence of impact was available. Further, due to the small scale of the majority of the cases, each project is likely to make little difference to health inequalities at a population level.

It is important to question whether rigorous evaluation and measurement methodology is suitable for these kinds of projects – knowing more about the impact of asset based working would clearly be useful for all sorts of reasons but imposing evaluation frameworks which require predetermined interventions, aims and objectives, may risk losing the innovative and flexible nature that makes these cases work. Methods must stand up to scrutiny without losing passion. Systems for monitoring and evaluation that are creative, participatory and fulfil accountability requirements are required. This presents a methodological challenge for asset based working.

The financial sustainability of asset based projects was also a pertinent issue in the research. Acknowledging the regulations that bind them, how can funding providers (both funding bodies and governmental funding sources) best

support these approaches on a longer term basis, allowing for flexible working, while maintaining lines of accountability and good governance? Should projects endeavour to demonstrate their financial worth in terms of what they may be saving the public purse? A number of cases utilised social return on investment analysis (SROI) as a useful starting point in this regard. Clearly, however, valuing a project in monetary terms is only one of many possible ways of evaluating its worth (NHS Health Scotland, 2011). Recognising that the work of these projects often represents a starting point for a longer process of change in people's lives, the issue of timescales for impact also needs to be taken into account.

Empowering

Central to the assets approach is the idea of people in control of their lives through the development of their capabilities and capacities. Enabling participants to direct their involvement in the projects studied, allowed ownership of the process. The research found projects to be focused not only on delivering short term outcomes or measurable impacts, but on equipping individuals with a set of core values, skills and abilities to manage and overcome future difficulties in their lives and crucially, to have a sense of worth and purpose.

Being human

The research uncovered a strong belief, amongst staff and participants, that mainstream services have lost an element of meaningful human interaction, becoming delivery focused and process driven. Interviews with project staff revealed deep emotional attachment to project participants and to the

wider community and a commitment to a set of values based on honesty and humanity. The themes of respect, inclusion and equality were ubiquitous.

The cases were strongly focused on creating positive change by concentrating on the abilities of each individual rather than their need, issue or problem. Supporting shared positive experience provided diversionary activity and progression for participants. Could and should mainstream services adopt and embed these characteristics more fully? And, if so, how might this best be done?



Conclusions and recommendations

This research supports the literature on asset based approaches and reinforces the underpinning principles of inclusion, participation, honesty, humanity, trust and respect. Placing a positive value on social relationships and networks and on the importance of growing aspiration, self confidence and efficacy, the research suggests that asset based working is also driven by a set of common goals.

Through the firsthand accounts of project staff and participants, this research demonstrates the perceived value of the approach in terms of wellbeing and resilience in the present and, perhaps more importantly, potentially for the longer-term.

These reflections do not negate the value of addressing structural circumstances (such as poverty, impediments to access, and wider social and cultural norms), in order to improve quality of life for individuals and communities. Rather, the research brings into sharper focus the need to redress the balance between deficit based and asset based working to enhance the wellbeing of individuals, families and neighbourhoods.

In order to support the future understanding and development of asset based working for health improvement within a Scottish context, a number of issues require further consideration and action. There is a sense that projects of the types described here are doing important and invaluable work, but are doing so in the face of a number

of obstacles. The approaches they are taking fit well with the integrative framework for public health, proposed by Hanlon et al., (2012) as being necessary for supporting a healthy and sustainable future. They all attend to the subjective interior world (Wilber, 2001), in both individual and collective ways. They all seek to move from the model of participant as 'customer', to participant as citizen (with responsibilities as well as rights). Several have an environmental focus, concerned with recycling or with better use of our land. And, as noted above, they all are located within an ethical framework that values inclusion, respect and mutuality. Arguably, these are features that need to become more, not less, common in all aspects of society in the future.

So, what are some of the issues that need further consideration for such approaches to be fostered more widely in Scotland?

- **Understand, locate, nurture and support asset based working**

Asset based projects, such as those described here, should be seen as an integral part of the system that creates population health and reduces health inequalities. To achieve this, serious consideration needs to be given to the range of approaches (projects and services) available to improve health within a defined population; what their roles are; what each can deliver; and how they relate to each other. Mapping this against the needs of the population then enables assessment of the goodness of fit, and recognition of the respective scale and contributions

of different approaches. As we have seen, these projects seem to achieve something different from statutory services, and their work also can provide the necessary foundation for other ends to be met. These contributions need to be nurtured and taken seriously – but first they need to be better understood in the context of wider services and the broad range of population need. In our view, a strong geographical population-based focus is necessary for this to be undertaken, including through community planning

partnerships and a stronger focus on neighbourhood management.

- **Refresh funding processes and streams**

Reducing the obstacles to seeking funding – for example through the consolidation of information on funding processes and the simplification of applications and evaluation processes – may help to de-mystify the funding process. Avenues that allow small scale projects to be funded in more flexible ways to support their development and longer term ambitions, should be explored by



funding providers. Indeed, the Scotland Funders' Forum (2010) has recognised that the current funding system is not working for funders or funded organisations and work is underway to identify practical solutions to address the barriers to effective reporting.

Consideration might usefully be given to how the range of funding and support which potentially exists for community based working might be pooled and utilised more effectively. Recent insights into how participatory budgeting could work in a Scottish context may prove useful in this regard (e.g. Harkins and Egan, 2012). The social enterprise dimensions of some of the cases studied illustrate ways in which financial sustainability can be located more firmly within the projects themselves. The Community Development Trust⁵ structure offers another model, and CDAS⁶ offers advice and training for interested groups.

- **Develop more appropriate measurement and evaluation approaches**

Our findings suggest that the current landscape of evaluation, measurement, indicators and targets is not conducive to assessing the value of, or fostering, asset based approaches. Hence, although there is a national drive for greater investment in asset based approaches, governance frameworks and predominant academic evidence hierarchies operate against this. New

frameworks are needed for measuring and valuing the 'softer' outcomes that are quoted by these projects, and for understanding their relationship to national and local outcome targets (including, but not exclusively, health targets). The ability to support projects and initiatives to do more of what they know works, and to allow them to readily demonstrate this, is crucial.

- **Build research and knowledge about asset based working**

All of the above require a stronger body of research and knowledge about asset based working. The systems-based approach that we are advocating requires thoughtful examination of current systems of services and other approaches to health improvement at the community level. We advocate bringing together communities, service users, providers and decision makers to examine current systems, consider how these need to change, and identify the place for and contribution of asset based initiatives within this system. Many questions will arise for which answers are not currently available, but through action research and learning good progress might be made, enabling a shift towards more empowering, sustainable and holistic approaches to improving Scotland's health.

⁵ Development Trust Association Scotland - <http://www.dtascot.org.uk/>

⁶ Community Development Alliance Scotland - <http://www.communitydevelopmentalliancescotland.org/>

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Case studies

The case studies presented here demonstrate asset based working in action across Scotland. The cases have a diverse range of target audiences, are based on a wide range of topic related activities and areas of interest, and vary in scale and reach.

It is hoped that these examples of practice, combined with the findings and discussion presented above, provide a stronger basis for colleagues to assess what might work to improve health and wellbeing within an asset based framework in their local context.

The detailed information presented in each case study was gathered from documentary analysis and staff and participant interviews. Each case study was approved by the individual project in question and all information was correct at the time of writing up the studies (October 2011 to February 2012).

Contact details for each case are presented in Appendix D.

Routes out of Prison (RooP)



Routes out of
Prison



Routes out of Prison (RooP)

is a life coaching project that works with prisoners due for release from a short term sentence to support them as they re-join society.

What are the aims and objectives?

The project recruits ex-offenders as life coaches to support repeat offenders with multiple disadvantages who are currently serving prison sentences. The aim is to assist with acquiring life, relationship and employability skills that will help ex-offenders to re-integrate and resume their place within the family and society, to reduce harm, to improve their work prospects and their health and, ultimately, to reduce re-offending.

Why was the project set up?

The project was devised by the Wise Group and began in 2006 with initial funding from the then Scottish Executive. It arose from a consultation with prisoners and staff at Cornton Vale and Polmont prisons about recruiting ex-offenders to mentor those currently serving prison sentences. Both the positive response from this consultation and the learning from a peer mentoring anti-suicide project for young people saw the project evolve.

Who are the participants and the partners?

RooP works with adult males, females and young offenders from six institutions across Scotland who are serving short-term sentences of between three months and four years and who are residents of Greater Glasgow, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire and the South West of Scotland. RooP works in partnership with the Scottish Prison Service and Families Outside with funding from a number of sources including the Scottish Government and the BIG Lottery. RooP also has links to the eight Community Justice Authorities in Scotland and the Criminal Justice Social Work Department.

“RooP is a transformational change project. It’s helping people to become assets to society.”

What does the project do?

RooP is focused on breaking the cycle of offending by working with the transient

prison population to help participants to stay out of prison for longer periods. The offer of a life coach is made to all eligible prisoners and it is for the individual to decide whether they choose to engage with RooP. Those who wish to work with the project are matched with a life coach who takes a holistic approach in providing one-to-one peer support to the prisoner for four weeks before release and for a number of weeks afterwards.

“The essence of the project is change. It’s about ex-offenders changing themselves with the help of someone who has changed.”

The prisoner and their coach jointly devise an action plan prior to release which sets out goals for their future direction on leaving prison. Following release, the life coach links the project participant to services, accompanies them to appointments, advocates on their behalf and provides practical assistance, emotional support and help to make informed choices. This way of working is termed by the project as a ‘bridging model’.

If appropriate, and when the participant is ready, they are put in touch with one of RooP’s employment consultants who will support them to find employment, training or education. It is recognised that employment helps to raise self esteem, allows the ex-offender to contribute to society, and provides a social network of non-criminals which helps to draw the ex-offender further away from offending; however, it can be difficult to secure employment with an offending background. Voluntary work is recommended as an option that confers similar benefits. The project also supports participants to re-establish and develop their relationships with families and significant others through a family relationship programme.

Engagement with RooP is participant-led and lasts for as long as the participant wishes. The average time a participant stays with the project is 13 weeks.

Has the approach changed over time?

The project has been in constant development since its inception. RooP was originally funded to deliver the service in three prisons. In 2008 the project was scaled up and extended to seven prisons across Scotland. Further changes have included the introduction of two Family Support Co-ordinators and the consolidation of operational and management procedures based on learning from experience.

In what way is the approach ‘asset based’?

Traditionally, ex-offenders are described by their problems. RooP focuses on the positives – skills, abilities and aspirations – and works with each participant on an entirely voluntary basis to plan for their future. An individual’s assets may have diminished during their imprisonment (e.g. confidence and self esteem) or they may express the desire to develop assets that they did not previously have (e.g. a life free from addiction, stable housing, or employment).

The life coaches, many of whom have an offending background, are able to draw on their experiences in turning their own life around to peer mentor ex-offenders. Each life coach is at least two years away from an offending past and working with the project utilises and builds on their assets. This one-to-one, person centred support from workers with valuable and varied life experience, is central to the project. One life coach spoke of the opportunity to give something back that working with RooP has afforded him.

Although life coaches work intensively with their participants, RooP is about doing 'with', not 'for' or 'to'. RooP participants identify their own support needs which are most commonly addictions, homelessness and unemployment. Individual and community level assets are key to the project – each participant is both building on existing and developing new assets and bringing these positive changes back into their local community.

“It’s an entirely bespoke service. It’s genuinely tailored to the needs of the participants.”

How has success been measured?

The evaluation of the project has taken an action learning approach to ensure that RooP participants are being supported in making positive choices around employment, health and family relationships. A Phase One (August 2006 to December 2008) and Phase Two (January 2009 to December 2010) evaluation have reported, both of which were carried out by

the Criminal Justice Social Work Development Centre for Scotland, University of Edinburgh.

What are the strengths and challenges?

In the two year period between January 2009 and December 2010 RooP signed up and engaged at least once in the community with 1,557 ex-offenders. The majority of participants were male (93%) and the largest group were aged between 21 and 30 years (46% and 41% respectively). Nearly two thirds were serving sentences between six and 24 months and for most this was not their first time in prison; 40% had served between two and four prison sentences and over a third had between five and ten previous sentences. Nearly a fifth (19%, 293) of those who engaged achieved a 'hard' outcome (employment, training or education). Social return on investment analysis found that RooP creates an average of £2 to £2.30 for every £1 invested.

The life coaches' experience as ex-offenders was valued and brought credibility to their role and they were found to have made extensive effort to reach individuals. Life coaches themselves reported increased confidence due to ongoing experience and training. Participants also valued the ability of life coaches to meet them at the gate on the day of their release where this was considered appropriate.

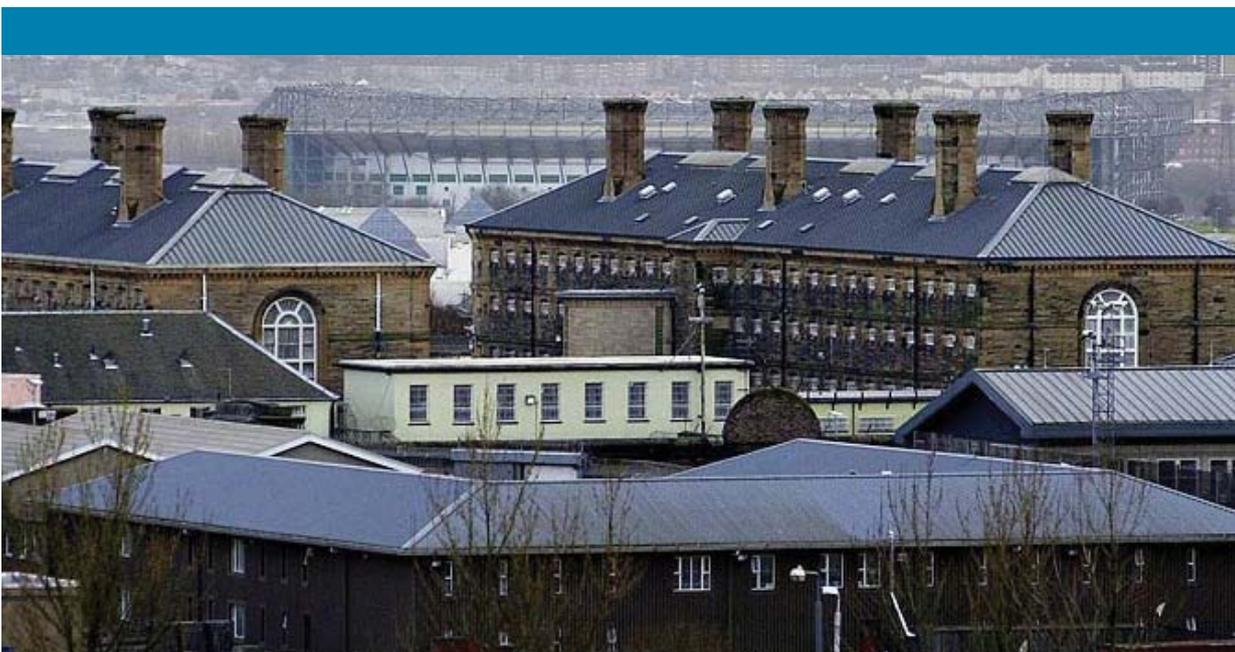
The Family Support Co-ordinators engaged with approximately 90 families annually. All participants were extremely positive about the Positive Relationships Programme and appreciated the opportunity to talk and listen.

The current model means participants have one life coach in prison and a different community life coach although experience suggests that one life coach for the whole journey would be preferable. Participants have a wide and varied range of needs and the challenge remains of how best to support those who continue to engage well with the project despite on-going complex needs.

Some participants return to prison on numerous occasions before they engage with RooP. The return to custody rates for those who engaged at least once in the community was 40% as compared to 44% for those who did not engage at all. However, the project recognises that keeping an individual out of prison for increasingly longer periods is a positive outcome for those who have consistently re-offended in the past.

The project has encountered challenges in systematically measuring soft outcomes but is moving towards tangible progress measures in order to demonstrate the impact of the service. Much anecdotal evidence exists through participant feedback and case studies that the project is changing lives for the better and that mental health and addictions issues are being positively affected.

At a personal level, staff expressed high levels of job satisfaction. Emotional involvement is common for life coaches and it can be disappointing when participants cease to engage. A sense of frustration at not being able to do more was expressed. However personal success stories from RooP participants are abundant.



Columba 1400

Columba 1400





Columba
1400

Columba 1400's Young People's Leadership Academy (YPLA)

is an intensive programme of individual and community change for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and tough realities.

What are the aims and objectives?

Columba 1400's Young People's Leadership Academy aims to provide young people from tough realities with a secure positive destination (education, employment or training) through a leadership development programme.

The Programme is underpinned by the distinctive Columban principles:

1. *Awareness* – knowing and understanding yourself, other people and your environment.
2. *Focus* – recognising and concentrating on critical and essential information.
3. *Creativity* – seeing and implementing solutions, ideas and initiatives.
4. *Integrity* – being reliable and trustworthy, remaining whole and true to your potential.
5. *Perseverance* – enduring and remaining strong when faced with complication, tragedy and resistance.
6. *Service* – sharing resources selflessly and effectively, using your strengths and experience to take meaningful action and contribute to the greater good.

Why was the project set up?

Columba 1400 was launched in 2000. The leadership centre for young people was founded by Norman Drummond in 1997 on the Isle of Skye. Columba 1400 fills a gap in service provision for young people leaving care in Scotland by supporting them to realise their potential in their own contexts. The project helps young people raise their aspirations and expectations in life, or explore their overall potential.

Who are the participants and the partners?

Targeted at young people aged between 14 and 24 years from disadvantaged backgrounds (care leavers, young carers, young people recovering from substance misuse, homeless/at risk of homelessness, and / or involved in the youth justice system), the YPLA programme supports the creation of new quality relationships based on mutual trust and respect and identifies the adults who could have a positive impact on the young people's lives.

Columba 1400 works in capacity-building partnerships with schools, residential units, young carers services, social work services and voluntary organisations across Scotland. The Programme also works with the people who can influence young people's lives including teachers, parents, carers and support workers.

The project is delivered throughout Scotland via local authorities and voluntary organisations. Over the last 11 years Columba 1400 has worked with every Local Authority in Scotland and with over 60 Scottish secondary schools. The project receives funding from a number of sources including the BIG Lottery.

Columba 1400 is delivered over two programme sites: Isle of Skye and Loch Lomond. The intensive residential element of the programme takes place at the base on Skye and the community development and aftercare is delivered from the base at Loch Lomond. The formal programme takes place over six months and the residential phase is six days. Each Leadership Academy is delivered to 16 individuals, usually comprising 13 young people and three support staff.

What does the project do?

Columba 1400's Young People's Leadership Academy engages with those who are hardest to reach – young people from 'tough realities' who may be living in chaotic circumstances. Many face the challenges of living in or leaving care, drug or alcohol dependency and / or homelessness. The YPLA supports young people to look beyond

"We try to open up what's already there. We are prepared to take a risk on an individual to give them the opportunity to realise their potential."

these circumstances, seize the initiative and use their backgrounds as a launch pad to change their futures. The project recognises the restrictive environments in which many young people operate and the limited employment opportunities they face.

The YPLA involves three phases, over a nine to twelve month period.

1. Columba 1400 staff engage with the wider service and community to build trust, understand the context of the young person's life and create a shared vision and goal. This takes place through a series of meetings and sessions over three months.

2. Following orientation and preparation (in the young person's community to enable them to shape their programme experience), a group of young people and their supporting staff experience a six day intensive residential element at the base on Skye.
3. Participating staff develop a process of ongoing support for the young person that allows them to achieve their goals and provide encouragement that aims to extend individual and community action. This is supported by gatherings, learning events and individual requirements over a number of years. This phase takes place at base near Loch Lomond.

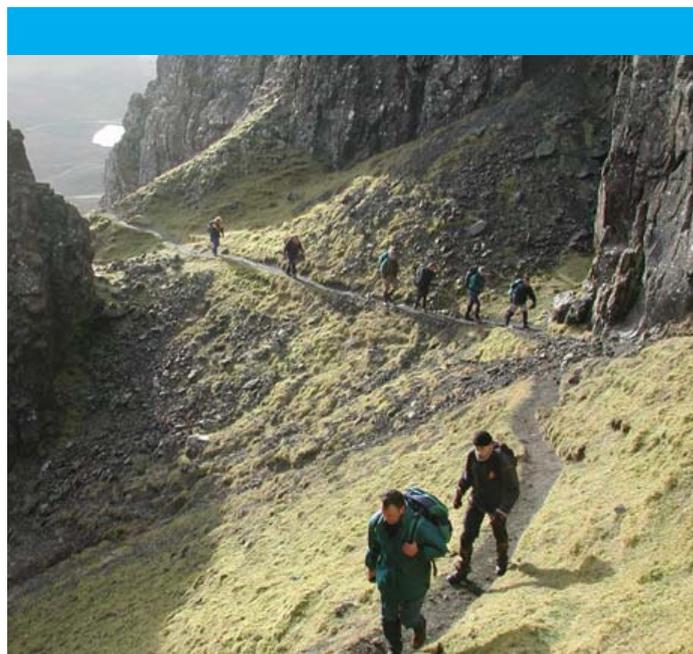
The programme content and aim are set by participants and are flexible, responsive and adaptable to the needs and wishes of the individual. The YPLA programme covers six topics, in line with the Columban principles – one per day in the residential course. Clear objectives are set for each day but how they are achieved is led by participants. Topics include conflict resolution, team building, and leadership. Phase three of the programme aims to lead to greater capacity for responsiveness, resilience and resolve in what will remain potentially challenging circumstances.

"We start where the participant is at."

The programme involves outward bound / team building work but also 'inward bound' work. Personal reflection time is integral to the approach to allow participants to think about and come to terms with their past, it is ***"made clear that that you have to deal with old stuff to move on and don't live in the past"***. Young people are both the managers and participants in their process of individual and collective change, thus reflecting the diversity of their communities.

Has the approach changed over time?

Over time the programme has developed, adapted and responded to needs of participants. The project was originally delivered as a two phase programme (initial engagement and residential course) but due to close working with other stakeholders, the programme now sits within the wider context in which young people live to include a community focus. New funding by the BIG Lottery has allowed the third phase of the project to be embedded.



In what way is the approach 'asset based'?

Columba 1400 believes that great personal and leadership capacity exists in those who have weathered tough times and releasing this potential brings enormous benefits for both the individual and society.

The programme is focused on developing and improving life skills and enhancing the strengths and personal resources of young people. This supports them to take back control of their lives, determine what is important to them and focus on their resources for the future. The programme also has a clear focus on the realisation of collective assets and connections through encouraging the young people to get involved in community change.

Participants report positive impacts of the programme on their lives including increased self respect and self worth as well as a number of community benefits such as restored family relationships and decreased anti-social behaviour. There is implicit recognition that providing better choices and improved chances for vulnerable young people may also help to reduce health inequalities.

How has success been measured?

A database of information allows baseline and outcome data on employment, education or training status to be recorded and reported. Measures are designed to elicit the nature and extent of the personal learning and change, appreciate how far the participants have come, and overall personal and community impact.

Internal evaluation is based on data gathered from participants on arrival at the residential course and at six month follow up. External evaluation is currently being carried out by the University of Glasgow.

What are the strengths and challenges?

Columba 1400 supports young people to understand their own potential and to grow into fulfilled and compassionate human beings with the ability to take a lead role in shaping their lives and communities. The targeted approach of the programme allows the young people involved to receive additional support in the development of life skills to inform life chances. Over five years (funded period 2009-14) the project will work with 1,079 direct beneficiaries and many more indirectly.

The intensive residential element of the programme allows in-depth experiential learning, exploration of values, creative thinking and the development of communication skills to support and enhance wellbeing and life opportunities. The programme also supports further development and consolidation of relationships between the young person and their key support staff members. Further, the programme has a positive impact on the young person's family and wider community, where many are able to identify what needs to change and to seek support and build the personal resources which can lead to action.



A 2009 independent evaluation reported that 75% (of a total of 3,500) YPLA graduates moved into or sustained a positive destination (employment, education or training), compared to 39% for a similar population out with the project. Ninety per cent of these participants also demonstrated positive development of self respect, resilience and self worth. Further qualitative research with participants found that the project helped them increase their self esteem and self worth, stop smoking, reduce their drug and alcohol use and overcome dependency on anti-depressants.

Due to the participants' backgrounds, challenges can be encountered in the delivery of the programme. The targeted nature of the course also limits the young people eligible to take part and may exclude many who would benefit. The cost of each course was identified as a challenge for the ongoing programme due to the economic downturn and local authority cutbacks.

Funding is a challenge for the project and, in particular, the need to continually source and secure funding was highlighted. Within the business management of the programme there is a requirement to ensure the programme keeps to core values and remains focused on the primary target group to ensure integrity and natural growth.

From a personal perspective, staff were focused on practising the values of Columba 1400 and embedding the underlying Columban principles within the work they do. Staff expressed high levels of job satisfaction, energy and passion for their work in releasing the *"untapped potential"* in young people. One staff member spoke of personal disappointment when a young person fails to complete the course or to recognise their own potential and their difficulty in switching off from the job to achieve a work life balance.

"The course makes you believe in yourself."

One participant spoke of gaining self belief, confidence and patience and of developing life skills such as being able to deal with difficult situations and identifying ways to help other people.

The Coach House Trust





The Coach House Trust

provides a range of occupational and learning opportunities to support people with multiple health or social barriers to move into employment, training or education. These opportunities include environmental conservation, landscaping, ceramics, traditional crafts and horticulture. The project is based in the West End of Glasgow and works with adults from across the city.

What are the aims and objectives?

The principal aim of the project is to promote empowerment by improving the life circumstances and life chances of adults who experience disability, disadvantage and exclusion. Participants are supported to identify and overcome the barriers to their social and economic inclusion and realise their full potential in society.

Who are the participants and the partners?

Based in the West End of Glasgow, the project engages with and assists adults from across Glasgow who are amongst the hardest to reach and furthest from the labour market. Participants may be experiencing enduring mental health problems, chaotic lifestyles (including drug and alcohol misuse), history of offending, learning issues and / or homelessness.

The Coach House Trust works in partnership with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and Glasgow City Council Social Work Services and receives funding from a number of sources including the BIG Lottery and the European Social Fund.

Why was the project set up?

Developed from The Belmont Lane Community Gardens Association, The Coach House Trust was established to provide productive work in the community for people coming out of long term institutional care and with a range of mental health, addiction and learning problems. An initial small grant from Glasgow City Council bought the necessary tools and equipment, and the project was launched in 1997 with an initial focus on restoring, designing and developing community green spaces.

What does the project do?

With the strapline *'challenging isolation and intolerance with innovation'*, the project provides an integrated and comprehensive package of support including engagement, orientation, core skills, pre-vocational training, work experience, guidance and mentoring, counselling and aftercare to assist participants to make the transition to independence and inclusion.

"We will always find something for everyone and work with them to discover their interests even if they don't know what they are when they arrive."

The approach taken is tailored to the needs, interests and wishes of the individual. The staff work with each individual to develop a personalised programme. Gardening and outdoor work are central to the project design, with training workshops provided in areas such as woodworking, recycling, ceramics, creative writing, fabrics, tree surgery, painting and horticulture.

Following an engagement, assessment, induction and orientation period of two weeks, participants are offered up to 35 hours of activity and support each week, learning in teams of up to six members. The workshops are relatively informal and emphasis is placed on individual development. People choose their activity and work at their own pace. Practical support and worthwhile work is offered to help

people productively reintegrate into community life. Project participants work in and with the local community so that mutual trust and respect is built and integration is strengthened.

The Coach House Trust encourages and supports participants where they wish to progress into education or employment. All activities are directed at a move into the labour market: ***"For some this is just a small step towards employment and for others this is a move back into work after receiving support"***.



Participants also have access to:

- Peer mentors who assist participants to overcome barriers to independence and inclusion such as addiction recovery, financial and housing issues while they are with the project. The peer mentors are former service users who have made the transition to independence and inclusion and wish to put their skills and experience to work in assisting others.
- Clinical support in terms of community mental health workers.
- Outreach support at crucial points which may present barriers to inclusion e.g. financial, housing, legal, benefits, family.
- Aftercare support to ensure gains made are not lost unnecessarily in the period of post project completion for up to nine months after the participant has formally left the project.

Has the approach changed over time?

The Coach House Trust has over 15 years of experience in delivering services and direct working with this client group. The project has developed over the years due to the changing nature of the marketplace. It has adapted and responded to the needs and interests of the participants as identified by partner and public sector organisations and the rising number of self referrals.

The number of activities on offer and the variety of produce grown by the project has also developed over time. Participants are able to take home the produce they grow and the remainder is used in the project café. Produce from one project base is sold at local farmers markets. A wide range of products created by the project, including bespoke furniture, art work and ceramics, are displayed for sale at the Coach House Trust Shop in Glasgow's West End.

In what way is the approach 'asset based'?

The project works to empower individuals by supporting them to build self esteem, self confidence and life skills. It also assists participants to take increased control over their own life circumstances and construct independent lives within their community, enhancing their resources and capabilities as they progress. Individuals are supported to identify and overcome barriers to their social and



economic inclusion in society and to realise their full potential thereby improving life chances and circumstances leading to a reduction in inequalities.

The project provides occupational, educational and employment opportunities and seeks to help the individual discover their talents through offering a wide range of workshops and activities. The project is focused on development of new assets and the enhancement of existing assets via individual learning opportunities, team working and the development of life skills. Confidence building is intrinsic to all project activities.

Through the peer mentoring approach of the project, the staff mentors have developed a range of skills and the confidence and ability of ex-participants is conveyed to new participants, demonstrating what a positive future can look like.

How has success been measured?

Project activity and performance are measured by means of recording on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. Using WEMWBS (the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale) and other validated scales, a baseline assessment of each participant is carried out at their initial project assessment. Each participant discusses and agrees what progress would look like for them and a personal development plan is put in place. Follow-up assessment is then carried out 12 weeks later to establish progress.

Internal evaluation of project design, delivery and performance is carried out on a quarterly basis and external evaluation commissioned on an annual basis. Contact is maintained with project leavers and through aftercare to facilitate longitudinal evaluation.

“We have ‘stickability’ – we don’t give up on people and bend over backwards to accommodate them.”

What are the strengths and challenges?

The Coach House Trust focuses on participant empowerment by building confidence, self esteem and life skills. Participants are actively engaged in the design and delivery of all programmes

and projects. The outdoor and environmental focus provides participants with work experience, formal certificated training and the development of a range of skills suitable for the workplace. Over the last three years, 18 people have moved into employment, two into modern apprenticeships, with all participants demonstrating positive progression on the employability pathway. Eleven participants have gone onto college (2010 to 2011).

The project adopts a flexible and adaptive response to the needs and wishes of the participants and strives to find an activity or area of interest for every participant, even if this takes time, and structure to the day for participants. Increases in confidence,

sense of control and quality of life (as measured by WEWMBS) has been reported for most attendees and an increase in the uptake of in-house services demonstrates that participants feel ready to have more input into the direction their lives take.

Improvements in mental health, physical health and social health are reported by the majority of participants who engage with the project, alongside improved confidence, self control and self esteem. Through the peer mentoring approach of the project, the mentoring staff with backgrounds and / or experiences similar to participants allow for an easier transition into the project as participants become aware that they too could have a more positive future.

Staff expressed frustration that some participants have developed a dependence on the project. It was felt that personal assets and attributes may be compromised for these participants. It is clear however that engagement with the project had not been at the detriment of any participant and all had benefitted in some way. When they are ready to progress, the need to more quickly move participants on to other suitable projects or into education or employment was highlighted.

Due to the current economic climate, the project faces challenges in securing employment opportunities, and previously set targets now felt unrealistic. Difficulties were also identified by the project in sourcing external support (in numeracy, literacy, legal and financial issues, and advocacy) due to organisational financial cutbacks by outside organisations and altered eligibility criteria. This type of support and training is increasingly being delivered by in-house staff as the need for support in these areas continues.

At a personal level, staff expressed high levels of job satisfaction and pride in being part of the 'journey' that participants take during their time with the project. There is clear recognition by the staff of the skills and attributes that the participants have if they are given a chance to develop them and are supported to do so. Participants expressed high levels of appreciation for the project and the range of activities and support they received. They spoke of the importance of the Coach House Trust in providing structure to the day, being able to develop new skills and work outdoors and the social interaction with other participants.

The Templehall Dads' Group





The Templehall Dads' Group

aims to provide meaningful activity for young dads in the Templehall area of Kirkcaldy. The project is largely based around gardening and horticulture.

What are the aims and objectives?

The aim of the project is to involve dads from an identified area of deprivation in a meaningful initiative that will encourage them to positively improve their health, wellbeing, employment and educational opportunities.

Specifically the project wishes to:

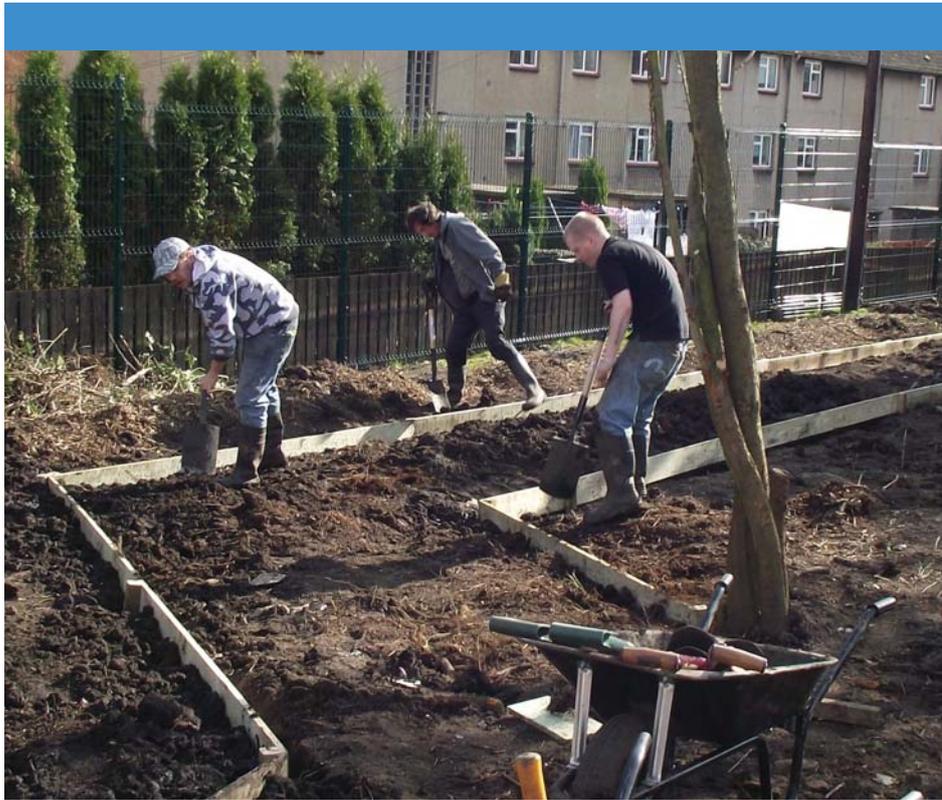
- Work in collaboration with local community partners to take forward a project focused on the needs and aspirations of young dads.
- Engage with young dads to develop their confidence and self esteem.
- To work alongside young dads to identify their expressed health, educational and social needs.
- Increase the young dads' core skills and future employability.

Who are the participants and the partners?

The project is based in the Templehall area of Kirkcaldy; one of Scotland's most deprived areas which has a high incidence of teenage pregnancy and thus young parents. The project works with young fathers living in Templehall area. There is no defined age range and the group is open to any dads in the area who express an interest in getting involved. Dads involved in the pilot gardening project ranged in age from 22 to 36 years. Since its inception in September 2010 the project has benefited 25 young dads with a core group of five to six participants who continue to engage.

The Cottage Family Centre is the base for the project. The Centre provides a range of services to local families and focuses on the

"Try to help you to fix it for yourself."



family unit, working with each member of the family individually and the family as a whole. The work of the Centre is responsive and is care and needs specific. It also provides practical support through group work led by the parents, and works to build the self esteem and confidence of parents and children.

A range of groups for the development of practical skills and for personal development are also held at the Cottage Family Centre including cooking classes, yoga, self defence and first aid, and childcare facilities.

The project is driven by the young fathers and overseen by a multi-agency steering group involving workers in the local area. The project is funded by Equally Well, Fife Council Community Learning and Development, the Jennifer Brown Trust and the Cottage Family Centre. It is further supported by a local building business in the provision of building and gardening materials and play equipment.

Why was the project set up? How has the approach changed over time?

Coinciding with increasing interest in young fathers on a national front, a piece of locally led research questioned the support available to young dads locally. The need to develop a local initiative that focused on young fathers was identified by community workers.

A small scale, short pilot project was developed initially and took place between August and September 2010. The project began with gardening and subsequent learning and training activities were directed by the group's specific needs. The project is part of the work of the Equally Well Fife Test Site and has continued to develop over time in response to local need and the wishes and ideas of the dads involved.

What does the project do?

The Templehall Dads' Group project plan was developed by community partners to engage and support local fathers in improving an outdoor space for children. Gardening related work is the main focus of the project alongside a range of other complementary activities. The dads meet at the Cottage Family Centre three days per week. A male community worker is employed and works alongside staff from the Centre to facilitate gardening activities as well as coordinating input from relevant agencies.

Establishment of the group saw the dads convert waste ground at the back of the Family Centre into a safe place for children and families to play and spend time together. The project was underway within five weeks, initially with seven dads in the garden, and was completed within six months. To celebrate the project achievements, an official launch of the garden took place in November 2010 with Gordon Brown (Kirkcaldy MP) officially opening the garden to the local community. In recognition of the dads' commitment and hard work, a plaque was mounted on a wall within the garden.

"It's amazing what the dads achieved on a small pot of money and the ideas they came up with."

Work on a second larger derelict piece of land beside the Family Centre began in February 2011 and was completed in September 2011. Leased from Fife Council for 25 years, the dads have designed a true community garden. The growing area produces vegetables for the Centre, and there are play areas and seating. There has been positive feedback from the community and an offer to lease more land to this project has been made.

The development of the second garden has had a positive impact on the surrounding houses and wider community with residents starting to tidy up their gardens with the dads helping if needed. Further plans include developing a community growing space (allotments), extending gardening skills, helping elderly people in the area, and establishing a 'dads-to-be' group.

Participants work towards achieving a Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) qualification, complete a certified first aid course and learn basic cooking and computing skills with funding provided by Equally Well. With the new allotment site, The Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) will be delivering SVQ in horticulture training on site to the Dads. Some dads are also involved in parenting sessions at the Centre which their partners and children are also attending.

In what way is the approach 'asset based'?

The project explicitly states on paper that it takes an asset based approach and explains: ***"the biggest gains... will come from supporting parents – to help them help themselves – and by creating communities which are positive places to grow up"***.

The project is focused on providing meaningful initiatives and activities for young dads which offer opportunities for learning, recognition of their abilities, the building of confidence and self esteem and improvements in physical, social and emotional health for them and their families. The young dads informally discussed their needs in relation to health, education and social issues during the early gardening work which shaped the consequent programme and allowed them to take ownership of the project and its future direction. The project also builds on the existing relationships and trust that families have with the different services in their lives and has helped to build mutually supportive friendships between young men in the area.

For participants, the project has given structure and purpose to their day, showed them that they have talents and can be good parents to their children. Some expressed that the project has had a positive knock-on effect on every aspect of their lives. Involvement in the Group has also enhanced the employment prospects of the young dads involved by developing new and strengthening existing skills, enhancing

“Getting out has improved my family relationships and there’s something for the kids to do. I like coming here.”

their CVs, providing volunteering opportunities and building confidence and positive aspirations for them and their families. The young dads are also providing a good role model for their children due to their involvement with the Group.

The staff engaged with the project have been able to work out with their traditional remits in working ‘with’ the dads. This has enabled them to see the dads as individuals with much to contribute and to support the dads to recognise their potential and abilities both in the development of new skills and within their role as parents. The project has also had a positive impact on the surrounding area and wider community by building community cohesion and improving the outdoor space for the benefit of the local community.

How has success been measured?

Evaluation is integral to the project. Measures have been put in place to capture each of the three outcomes as stated below:

- Work in collaboration with community partners to facilitate a small project with young dads to inform a future local initiative.
- Increase the self esteem and confidence of participants.
- Demonstrate an increase in participants’ educational and social skills.

Data gathered to profile the fathers is specific to the project aims and planned outcomes. Participant profiles are established at the outset (postcode, age, age of partner, number of children, employment status, whether in education or not) and

a range of informal methods are used to capture dads' thoughts on the project. Photographs of the garden have been taken as it has progressed and the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWEBS) was used pre and post pilot to look at the mental wellbeing of the dads.

What are the strengths and challenges?

Of the 25 dads engaged with the project to date a number have moved into employment or education. Others went *"back to life with much better attitudes"* following support from the wider Family Centre and project. A small number have had onward referrals to other support agencies.



The dads reported an overall improvement in their wellbeing. Some dads reported feeling happier within their own family and improved family relationships, both between the parents and between the parents and children. One dad described the project as *"life changing"*.

The development and creation of the new garden was led by the Dads' Group. The participants made the decisions on what the garden would look like and how the work would be undertaken. Flexibility as to how the garden was developed was integral to the approach and was led by the development of group ideas and joint working. New dads joining the group are supported / mentored by the dads who are existing members.

The forward thinking nature of the project, effective partnership working and information sharing have allowed the project to be a success. The local community, statutory and voluntary agencies, local businesses and fathers have been able to work together to address a local need. The trusted workers facilitating the activities and providing general support are pivotal in keeping the group working together effectively.

On the other hand, the ongoing need for funding means the Group is continually *"fighting for survival"*. Project sustainability is a challenge due to the economic downturn and associated local authority cutbacks. The complexity of the welfare

system and the benefits arena were also highlighted as many of the young dads have experienced difficulties with their benefits payments due to their involvement with the project.

At times, slow progress (related to funding issues) has made it difficult to sustain interest and motivation from the dads as the drive and commitment of the dads is crucial for success of the project.

Although a number of challenges were identified, the dads involved with the project were keen to emphasise the overwhelming positive nature and importance of the Dads' Group.

From a personal perspective, the staff and partners of the project expressed pride in what the young dads had achieved, the personal journey each of them had taken and the positive impact this had had on their families.

“The dads achieved so much out of something so simple – not just a physical achievement but a personal journey.”

Participants spoke of their increased confidence and the new skills they have developed as well as their own pride in seeing their ideas and hard work come to life. The project has been able to give participants something constructive to do and to gain a new outlook on life. The Dads' Group has also facilitated interaction between people in similar circumstances and has improved family relationships.

Older People for Older People (O4O)





Older People for Older People (O4O)

was a research and development project working with older people in remote, rural and peripheral communities to explore how communities could support older individuals to maintain independent living.

What were the aims and objectives?

O4O set out to test the extent to which it was possible and beneficial for communities to set up and provide services to maintain independent living. It worked with communities to develop potentially sustainable social enterprises and volunteering.

The aim of implementing O4O in rural communities was to engage older people in the co-production of services. O4O aimed to:

- Recognise that older people contribute to sustainable, vibrant communities.
- Maintain people living independently in their communities for as long as possible.
- Include people of all ages.
- Develop resources that already exist within communities to promote the health and wellbeing of older people.
- Recognise that older people greatly help each other to live in their communities.
- View older people as a positive force and valuable assets.

O4O was not about doing the things that statutory providers are there to do. It was about providing things that statutory providers do not do or cannot provide that improve quality of life for older people. O4O was about supporting service providers.

Why was the project set up? Did the approach change over time?

O4O grew from the 'Our Life as Elderly' Northern Periphery Programme which found that people wanted to remain living in their own communities when older, but were

concerned that there would be insufficient support services. O4O was a response to emerging policy across the EU suggesting that people in communities should become increasingly involved in providing their own basic services to benefit both communities (development of social capital and capacity) and individuals (developing social contacts, helping to improve wellbeing and health).

O4O was set up as a three year project which began in January 2008 funded by the European Union Northern Periphery Programme with support from organisations within each of the partner countries: Scotland, Sweden, Finland, Greenland and Northern Ireland. The approach taken grew organically based on work within the four unique communities.

Who were the participants and the partners?

O4O worked in remote, rural and peripheral communities in six locations across Europe. This case study is based on the project based in the Scottish Highlands which included four remote and rural geographical communities: Ardersier, Assynt, Tongue and South West Ross. The project worked with people aged 55 years and over in these four geographical communities and engaged up to 200 people.

Funded primarily by European Northern Periphery Programme (NPP), O4O ran from January 2008 to December 2010. The lead partner country was Scotland, based at the University of the Highlands and Islands Centre for Rural Health.

The Scottish O4O Project Manager was recruited in June 2008, and remained in post until June 2011. In three communities a local social entrepreneur was engaged as a consultant on a part-time basis to help develop the communities' ideas into an organisational structure capable of delivering services with a view on future sustainability.

Three of the four community led social enterprises which were supported by O4O are now well established community resources.

What did the project do?

O4O was a response to the increasing proportion of older people in the Northern Periphery, especially in remote and rural areas, and looked at how communities could support older individuals to maintain independent living. In some communities it worked to help develop potentially sustainable social enterprises (not-for-profit social businesses) and in other communities it supported the development of volunteering. The project sought to test the policy rhetoric about the role of individuals and communities

“What’s good for the whole community is good for older people and what older people need, the whole community needs.”



in accepting responsibility for their own care and support and the changing role of public services from top-down delivery to co-production.

O4O Project Managers ‘mentored’ communities and captured information on the process of social enterprise development through an action research approach. Communities were supported to develop organisations that they felt met their needs. This was an organic and intuitive process with communities opting for different organisational and service types. No budget was available to communities but there was individual support to each community to develop its unique plan. The focus was future sustainability and the development of a service which would help older people to maintain independent living, i.e. *“something good for the whole community with an intergenerational focus”*.

O4O aimed to develop initiatives that generate positive community impact. Four stages of implementation were identified within the project to act as a guide for the development of social enterprises – initiating community engagement; needs identification; establishing the social enterprise; and sustaining the social enterprise(s). In general, O4O staff worked with communities to:

- identify their needs for services to help maintain older people living at home;
- identify gaps in service provision that would help statutory providers to keep older people living in their homes and communities;
- develop new ways of providing supporting services involving community members; and
- assist in the development of volunteering, social organisations and social enterprises.

In Highland, the O4O Project Manager first engaged in a consultation exercise with public and third sector practitioners to determine which remote and rural communities of older people might have unmet needs. Meetings were then held with identified

communities and voluntary groups. The Project Manager worked with and mentored the four communities that had expressed interest in developing an O4O initiative. The focus was on supporting the communities to recognise a specific need and supporting organisational development.

Ardersier

The first stage of O4O in Ardersier was an oral history project – the Ardersier Heritage DVD project. A group of older people interviewed other older people who live in or have a connection to the village about their early memories. A video camera and editing equipment were purchased by the Community Council with support from the local Councillors' Ward Discretionary Budget and the interviews were video recorded in order to create a social history DVD. Approximately 20 interviews were filmed and footage was edited by a volunteer to produce DVDs. Training in interviewing and camera use was provided for the older volunteers. Those who agreed to be interviewed benefited from the interest shown in the stories they told. The project successfully included people who were housebound as well as those with a disability or short-term memory loss. O4O in Ardersier worked with the Highlanders' Museum, local councillors, UHI Centre for History, BBC Alba, the Scottish Oral History group, and various local groups in the village.

“Fantastic resource for families and children and for the future.”

Assynt

The Assynt Centre had been run by the local authority and provided day centre services, residential respite, and a lunch club. When the local authority decided to close the service they agreed to give money to the community to make alternative provision for older people in the area. O4O supported the development of Community Care Assynt (CCA) which was established as a community interest company to run services for older people in the community. CCA is continuing to develop the Assynt Centre as a community care hub, offering a range of opportunities for social interaction, peer support, and the development of social networks. Training from the Social Enterprise Academy has been provided for volunteers involved in establishing this O4O project.

The Assynt Centre is not a care facility but a community resource. By registering the people who work in the Centre and the services they provide rather than the building itself, the community have greater control and flexibility over the activities and functions of Centre. The Centre provides a lunch club and more – reminiscence

sessions, Gaelic classes, chess club, book club, creative arts, knitting, ceramics, etc with the “older people seen as resource”. Social interaction between the community and bringing

“The centre is a resource for the whole community, across all age groups and community members.”

“It provides a safe place for people to be happy. If they are happy they’re more likely not to feel ill or have poor mental health.”

people together is seen as one of the most important aspects of the work of the Centre.

Tongue

The Tongue community’s priority was a community transport service which they called T4T – Transport for Tongue, Melness and Skerryay. The community

wanted a bespoke and tailored service to specifically meet the needs of the elderly residents and to support the whole community. Applications for funding were made by the community group supported by O4O, and T4T successfully obtained a Highland Council Community Transport grant. The need for transport in the area was heightened by the withdrawal of the Royal Mail bus service.

T4T has four strands. The first is an informal service making links between those individuals who need transport with those who can provide it. The second strand

involves volunteer drivers using their own cars to transport people in return for a mileage allowance. These, along with the third element, a community car scheme, are funded by a grant and local fundraising activities. This funding has enabled the community car scheme to purchase a car and pay a driver. Both are regarded as community assets. The community car is used to transport groups of individuals to various locations and for various purposes. The fourth element of T4T is the maintenance and hire of a donated minibus to other community groups.



The community and the social entrepreneur ensured that T4T meets both community needs and, importantly, generates income that will contribute to future sustainability. T4T have recently secured a new transport grant and are focused on diversifying and becoming established, as opposed to an additional service, and plan to tender for a public transport contract.

South West Ross

The Howard Doris Centre is a social enterprise that provides a range of services for older people in South West Ross. O4O worked with the community and

“The service is now a valuable part of the community.”

the Centre to develop additional community services (e.g. a neighbourly helping scheme) to support older people in their own homes. The idea of O4O met with some resistance in South West Ross and has not been as successful as in other places. The lessons learned from this were used to strengthen O4O in the future.

In what way was the approach 'asset based'?

O4O sought to portray older people positively as valued members of society and not as 'helpless' burdens or victims. By involving older people in the design and development of service provision for other older people, O4O sought to acknowledge the skills and experiences of older people. The project supported lifelong learning in older people, helping them to flourish as assets within their local communities and to *"feel valued again"*.

Older people were empowered to identify and meet the needs of local citizens and supported to develop a variety of social organisations to meet those needs in order that they, and other people, might continue to live healthily and happily in their own homes and communities for longer, sustaining remote community life. This helped people take control of their lives and maintain people living independently in their communities as long as possible.

"Find sources of local support for local issues."

O4O started with the assets and resources in a community, including older people's knowledge, skills and experience, and invested in the older people as active participants, recognising that they contribute to sustainable, vibrant communities. These new skills and confidence made possible the running of an organisation and service which did not run previously. The approach taken by O4O supports the changing role of public services from top-down delivery to a model of co-production. Furthermore, O4O supported people to develop their potential by providing support to complete training, access funding and gain public sector support.

How was success measured?

Research was carried out to monitor the impact of O4O projects on individuals, communities and statutory service providers.

The project manager captured information through activity reporting – the completion of a template on a monthly basis that captured perceived achievements, progress, issues and risks. This acted as a data gathering and self reflexivity tool. Written reports were analysed qualitatively to identify stages of social enterprise development and to draw out the policy implications emerging from the implementation process.

At the beginning of 2009, an O4O questionnaire asking about aspects of health and community participation was sent to over 2,500 people aged 55 years and over. The response rate was 58% indicating high interest in the research.

Interviews with 26 older people who were involved with their local O4O project were carried out in July and August 2009. Interviews were also carried out with potential users of the proposed services. The interviews aimed to assess the progress and impact of each project in its community and to record the experiences and views of both participants and those who might benefit from the future service.

What were the strengths and challenges?

O4O challenged perceptions of older people as being a burden on society and presented them instead as a rich resource and the lifeblood of rural communities. The European partners brought into perspective what life is like for older people in other communities which helped the older people in Highland reflect that they are not alone.

O4O provided real support to the community as a whole and to individual community members and helped open doors for the community which would have otherwise remained closed. The Project Manager ensured that the project was led by the community. Support was provided at the pace of the community and helped instil confidence that they were able to take this on. Although the project came to an end, the services developed by older people in the rural communities involved have been sustained and continue to develop.

The project produced a toolkit to help others develop social enterprises in rural communities. O4O also published a series of policy briefings. Learning from the project can be used to shape a future agenda for older peoples' service provision through social enterprise and help develop practical recommendations on what needs to change in local, national and international policy to develop community co-production. Policy recommendations from O4O include:

- Communities should be involved in the delivery of older peoples' services.
- Policy should commit to service co-production with communities.
- Structures need to be put in place that empower communities to engage with service co-production.
- Older peoples' needs must be fully integrated into policy-making and public sector decision-making.

Each community was able to readily identify a need but required a catalyst to spark plans and activity to achieve something real and long term for the community. There was a lack of confidence and knowledge amongst older people in the community. Had O4O not been involved and able to support local plans and progress, the outcome for each community may have been different.

Furthermore, O4O encouraged and supported the development of services based

on a social enterprise model and, after a specified time period, stepped back from the community. One staff member expressed some apprehension about the burden of responsibility this left on local people, many of whom have other commitments. Pre-existing and deep rooted conflict within communities was also identified as an ongoing challenge for the project, which was thought to be particularly difficult to manage in a rural community. Finally, some local people wanted more service provision and financial support from the Council rather than doing something to help themselves.

At a personal level, staff expressed high satisfaction and pride in being part of the journey taken by each of the communities as they developed their own unique services and their ability to overcome the challenges they faced. Staff also spoke of the inspiring and energetic individuals who worked tirelessly for their communities.

On the other hand staff reflected that the work was highly stressful at times. In *“standing back and letting communities do it for themselves”* there were frustrations due to a need for progress within the time limited project. Taking on the development of a social enterprise was also felt to be *“a huge undertaking for a small community”*.

Participants expressed great appreciation for the support brought to the community by O4O and the skills they had developed. Participants also highlighted how the

“Community spirit has spread through the whole community.”

project had brought the community together and built new relationships and new friendships locally. Participants also spoke of the steep learning curve involved, the difficulties encountered working with large statutory agencies

and the *“weight of expectation”* in developing and running a sustainable social enterprise for the whole community.

Gorbals Recycles

Gorbals Recycles





Gorbals Recycles

is a community-led social enterprise with an environmental focus. It is made up of local people and provides meaningful and worthwhile volunteering opportunities, work experience and access to free training courses for adults. The project is based in the Gorbals area of Glasgow.

What are the aims and objectives?

The aims of the project are to raise awareness about environmental issues by providing opportunities for people to reuse, reduce and recycle their domestic waste. The project does so by providing a range of services and creating training and volunteering opportunities for local residents.

Additionally the project aims to divert as much domestic waste from landfill as possible while providing high quality services and products for sale to local people. Furthermore, the project works to assist the volunteers in becoming 'work ready' and to have the confidence to apply for jobs or educational opportunities.

Who are the participants and the partners?

Based in the Gorbals area of Glasgow, the project engages with the long term unemployed, homeless people moving into accommodation, individuals and families in need of emergency housing support (e.g. clothing, furniture, etc) and refugees and asylum seekers in the local area. Employing ten members of staff and supporting up to 50 volunteers per year in training and work experience placements, volunteers engage and work with the project for as long as they feel they need to on an individual basis.

The project works in partnership with a number of local and government agencies to provide volunteer and work placements. Partners include the WISE Group, Glasgow South East Regeneration Agency, Valuing Volunteers, Glasgow Volunteer Centre, Apex, and the Scottish Community Training Foundation. The project, which comprises two charity shops and a bicycle workshop and showroom, is funded by the BIG Lottery.

The project is managed by a Board of Directors made up of local community residents and skilled people.

Why was the project set up? How has the approach changed over time?

In April 2004 a group of local people came together at a community consultation event. They formed a steering group to tackle issues related to the lack of recycling facilities in the area. The group quickly developed in to a Board and the Gorbals Recycles Project was established. Initially working with Glasgow City Council and the local housing associations, the project initiated the first blue recycling bins to be introduced in the Gorbals. Links were subsequently made with local primary schools in relation to recycling initiatives and a learning pilot project took part with one of the local schools. The need to provide a charity shop was identified through a community consultation event. In January 2007, the post of project coordinator was developed to oversee refurbishment of a property and to develop future services of the project.

The project now has three retail outlets across the city. In January 2008, the Gorbals Recycles Project successfully accessed three years funding from the BIG Lottery for the running of a charity shop and bicycle workshop. In October 2009, additional premises were secured in the Saltmarket area of the city and a charity shop, Market on the Green, was opened the following month. The original project premises were

given over to accommodate Re-spoke Cycles, due to the increasing demand for bicycle sales and repairs. In May 2011 a second charity shop, New to You, was opened due to an increasing demand for furniture.



Re-spoke Cycles is based in the Gorbals area of Glasgow and offers a large selection of refurbished bicycles for sale, for both adults and children and a full range of accessories and parts. Fully qualified staff provide a repair service and custom build bikes.

Market on the Green, located at Saltmarket area of the Glasgow, provides a range of goods at low cost including quality clothing and accessories. The shop also sells furniture, household goods, bedding, curtains, books, toys, games, and nursery equipment.

Based in the heart of Partick in Glasgow, *New To You*, stocks a range of furniture at extremely competitive prices. The shop also provides a 'fresh start package' for people on a low budget who are finding it difficult to furnish a new home.

The project continues to evolve due to local demand, the diversity of the people involved and the developing skills and ideas of individuals.

What does the project do?

Gorbals Recycles provides volunteering opportunities for between 15 and 30 volunteers at any one time with a range of free training, both certified and un-certified, available to all volunteers. Training the volunteers both assists with the running of operations and improves their skills and confidence. Areas of volunteering available within the project include bicycle mechanics, customer services, handling and sorting, sales and marketing and delivery and collections. The area of volunteering for each person is decided on a case-by-case basis reflecting the skills, confidence and language abilities of the individual.

Accepting donations from all areas of Glasgow, services provided by the project include; the sale of furniture at a low cost with low delivery costs (£5 maximum), the sale of bikes at a low cost, the sale of good quality clothing, emergency packages for families and individuals in immediate need, and a free bicycle repair service for children. The project also holds a number of community events throughout the year as well as volunteer events and day trips.

The project generates income from the scrap value of non-saleable stock and by hiring out furniture and props to local groups. Scrap metal is also sold and there is a small charge for house clearances and removals. All money generated goes back into the project to improve services and support the free children's bicycle repair scheme, which allows children from low income families to keep active.

In what way is the approach 'asset based'?

The project works to provide a range of volunteering and work experience positions for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, against a backdrop of environmental protection and recycling. Gorbals Recycles strives to accommodate all levels of skills and time commitments. The project works with people and helps them to identify and focus on the assets and strengths within themselves and their local communities, and supports them to use these assets to make sustainable improvements in their lives. It is a project run *"by the community, for the community"*.

The project utilises the existing skills and abilities of volunteers to place them in suitable voluntary positions and supports them to develop their potential. For example, a new volunteer with experience of working in a furniture store was placed in furniture deliveries and is passing his skills to other young male volunteers.

Volunteers report improved confidence, self esteem, the development of new skills, knowledge and certified training leading to better CVs, and valuable work

"Prosperity and skills from throw away goods."

experience leading to improved chances of employment. The project invests in participants as active citizens and encourages them to support their local community and to get involved.

How has success been measured?

A retrospective internal evaluation was carried out in September 2011. This evaluation focused on service users, volunteers, work placement staff and the project finances. All staff and volunteers were integral to the evaluation process. A range of customer surveys, surveys with partner agencies and a staff/volunteer skills audit were also carried out.

"It gives me personal fulfilment."

The level of recycling is monitored and measured via collection sheets which state the number and type of donations received and the weight of the goods being diverted from landfill.

What are the strengths and challenges?

Gorbals Recycles provides meaningful and worthwhile volunteering opportunities, work experience and access to free training courses for people from the local community. The project provides structure and purpose to daily life for many volunteers, especially for the large number of young people involved with the project. Project involvement is participant led. Participants are able to select the area of the business within which they would like to work (bike shop repairs, customer services, sorting, cash handling, etc) with movement into other areas when they feel comfortable and confident. The certified and un-certified training courses are employment oriented and participants also gain real life retail employment and transferable skills.

By the end of 2010, the project had recruited a total of 157 volunteers to positions within the project. A good success rate of people moving in to employment, training and further education was reported. Two young volunteers moved into full time paid employment with the project with the support of funding from the Commonwealth Fund. During 2010, the project also provided low cost or free furniture packages to refugee or asylum seeker families, assisted local households and, following a fatal multi-storey fire in December 2009, provided 77 affected families with clothing and acted as a point of distribution. Finally during 2010, the project facilitated the reuse of goods including 480 bicycles, 908 metric tonnes of furniture, 35 metric tonnes of books and nine metric tonnes of toys and gym equipment. During 2011, the project prevented 1,238 metric tonnes of waste from going to landfill.

The project has shown positive effects on mental health and in supporting people to overcome isolation and maintain addiction free status.

The project highlighted the ongoing dependence on short term funding and the associated need to continue searching for new funding opportunities as a major

challenge. The complexity of funding application forms and the eligibility criteria were also seen to be constraints. In addition, the changing welfare system and the need for clear, user friendly information on how working and volunteering affect benefits entitlement were also raised.

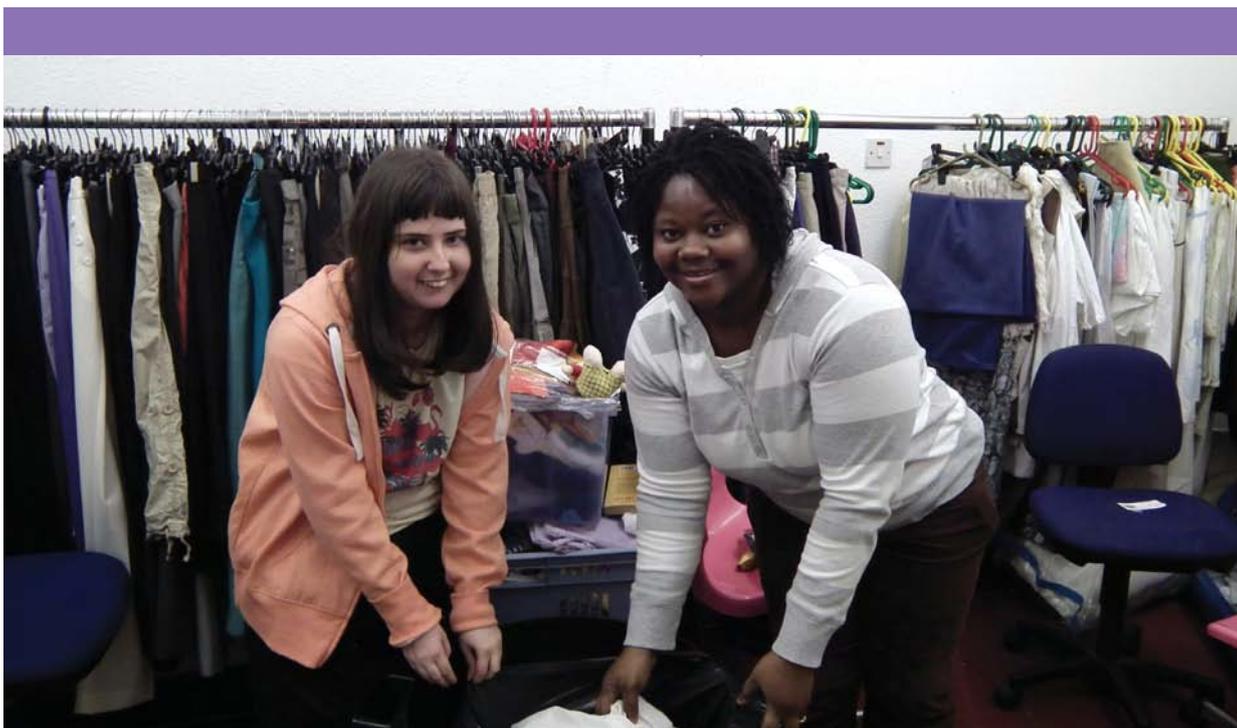
“If this wasn't here I don't know where I'd be. It's given me a real boost.”

The clear need to develop better marketing tools was highlighted as an immediate challenge for the project as both sales and donations are down presently. Also, due to financial constraints, the project has been forced to limit the training opportunities it offers to those training courses which can be delivered in-house by project staff.

At a personal level, staff stated that the project was *“more than just a job”* and that great personal fulfilment was gained from being able to support people in difficult circumstances and to see these people gain skills and confidence in their abilities.

On the other hand staff reflected that the work was highly stressful and pressured at times. A particular difficulty was experienced in balancing the business side of the project with the human side in working with a team of staff and volunteers, each of whom have a level of reliance on the project.

Project volunteers praised the supportive and inclusive nature of the Gorbals Recycles approach. They particularly valued the project's support to move at their own speed and take one step at a time.



The Zone's Home Buddy Scheme

The Zone's Home Buddy Scheme



the ZONE

The Zone's Home Buddy Scheme

is an intergenerational project run by The Zone Initiative which provides support for older, disabled and vulnerable people to live an independent, healthy and active lifestyle within the Doon Valley area of East Ayrshire.

What are the aims and objectives?

The Home Buddy Scheme provides a tailored service to assist older people, disabled and vulnerable adults in the Doon Valley area, to live in their homes and communities for longer than may otherwise be possible without feeling lonely, isolated or afraid. The project also provides a range of social activities and companionship to their participants.

An additional aim of the project is to assist the Home Buddies in becoming 'work ready' by providing funded project placements, volunteering opportunities and certified education and training in a wide range of areas.

Why was the project set up?

The Zone started 25 years ago as Bellsbank Adventure Playground in direct response to the growing number of children, young people and adults who required support to achieve personal goals. The Zone was officially opened in 2010, as a non-profit making multifunctional project aimed at providing good quality childcare, leisure, recreational and educational opportunities for children, young people, elderly and local communities of East Ayrshire. The focus is on improving quality of life by promoting physical, spiritual and mental wellbeing and by empowering people to make positive changes in their lives.

Based on forming partnerships locally, the Zone is committed to promoting social friendships and strong interpersonal skills, building confidence, and providing educational opportunities and employment services. The Zone employs 14 members of staff.

The Home Buddy Scheme was launched in 2010 and provides a domestic and household service. The Scheme was developed through the Future

"Home Buddies bring the outside world into them [older people]."

Jobs Fund – an initiative working with East Ayrshire Council skills development and employability service to provide job opportunities for young people (aged 18-24 years) which also provide a benefit to the community. There are four Home Buddies and 32 participants each of whom lives in one of four areas of rural deprivation.

Who are the participants and the partners?

Based in an area which has been deeply affected by the decline of the mining and textiles industries, the project supports a predominately older population. Many young people and families have moved out of the area for work and it is felt that *“the sense of community has been lost”*. The project works with older, disabled and vulnerable people in the Doon Valley area, particularly in Dalmellington and Patna.

“They’re flexible to your needs.”

The Zone works in partnership with East and South Ayrshire Councils, NHS Ayrshire and Arran and is funded by Fairer Scotland Fund, Coalfields Regeneration Trust, Ayrshire Leader, Inspiring Scotland, Mineral Trust, Abbey Trust and several private companies. The work of The Zone is overseen by a Board of Trustees which is made up of local people who are interested in the welfare of children and young people and includes youth and adult community representatives.

The Home Buddy Scheme is co-ordinated by the Project Manager of The Zone.

What does the project do?

The Home Buddy Scheme provides a personal and professional service which is individually tailored to assist people to live in their homes and communities for longer than may otherwise be possible without feeling lonely, isolated or afraid. The Scheme is particularly aimed at those over 65 years of age or with a disability that makes everyday domestic chores difficult and who would consequently benefit from some extra help at home.

Each of the four Home Buddies works with up to 13 project participants at any one time, across four areas of rural of deprivation. Each Home Buddy works three hours each day face-to-face with participants. They also write up a daily diary of activities and tasks undertaken and attend and contribute to a weekly team meeting. Each Home Buddy also works towards achieving an SVQ in Health and Social Care. An assessment of the needs of each participant is made before they are matched up with a Home Buddy.

The service is tailored according to the needs and wishes of the participant and is responsive and adaptable to their individual circumstances. It works to support the participant to remain independent and to encourage them to maintain existing abilities and skills in the home where appropriate. Home Buddies visit each participant

once or twice per week for up to two hours at each visit depending on circumstances and need. On the days a Home Buddy does not visit they phone to make sure the participant is well.

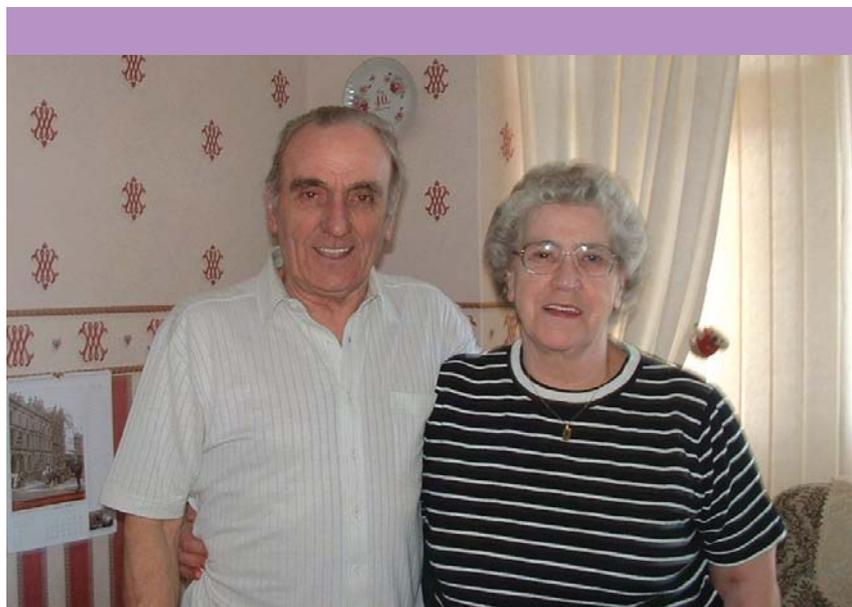
"It's a comfort to know that once a week somebody's going to come in."

Due to changes in the personal care services provided by local councils, the old style 'home help' service is no longer provided. The Home Buddy Scheme fills this gap by providing a wide and varied range of support and help including:

- Accompanying people to and from shopping trips or assisting them with shopping;
- Escorting participants to a social event or club, post office, bank, medical appointment or other essential tasks;
- Help with letters and bills;
- Companionship and socialising;
- Household duties such as changing a bed or curtains, vacuuming, window cleaning, making light meals, washing or ironing;
- Any other household duties the participant might require to be completed in order to make their life less anxious and more comfortable.

In general, Home Buddies provide a link to the community for people who miss having someone to talk to. The Zone also provides a range of social activities to bring project participants together for leisure and recreation events and also for information providing sessions.

Referrals to the project come from a range of sources including family and friends, GP or community nurse, social work and personal care staff and self referral. The Zone also advertises the Home Buddy Scheme locally.



Has the approach changed over time? What are the project's future plans?

Though the original aims of The Zone have remained unchanged, for sustainability reasons the company has diversified into other areas of work and developed new project areas.

The initial plan for the Home Buddy Scheme was for four Home Buddies to each work 20 hours per week. However, due to funding constraints the project was reviewed, with the needs of the participant at the centre, and the project was scaled back with each Home Buddy working 16 hours per week.

The recruitment of more Home Buddies is planned to further develop the services available and to extend the reach of the project to more elderly and vulnerable adults across a wider geographical area. The project would also like to expand the services provided to include benefits entitlement advice and household energy information. Further, the project is developing plans to assist participants to attend clubs and social events in local community centres which are under utilised.

In what way is the approach 'asset based'?

The Home Buddy Scheme works to provide a personal, flexible, responsive, reliable and professional support and household service to older, disabled and vulnerable adults in areas of rural deprivation in East Ayrshire for as long as required by the participant.

The project utilises the existing skills, energy and abilities of young people as Home Buddies to support elderly and vulnerable adults to maintain their independence, support them to continue to carry out tasks within the home where appropriate, and to remain part of their communities. The Home Buddies carry out a range of household duties and provide companionship to help the participants to feel more comfortable in their own homes.

The Scheme supports the Home Buddies to develop their potential and enhances their skills for relationships, self esteem, and resilience by building supportive networks



and friendships with other Home Buddies and building intergenerational harmony with the adults they work with. The Home Buddies also support the preservation of the existing

assets and abilities of the participant and help them to maintain control of their own environment.

The Zone has wider community benefits through the provision of recreation and leisure opportunities for the whole community, by offering a range of volunteering opportunities with other community groups and initiatives, and by providing educational and work orientated skills development and formalised training and education. The initiative also provides a range of social activities and events to bring community members together to encourage social interaction, physical and mental wellbeing and promote community cohesion.

The Home Buddies are having a direct impact on the general health, security at home and sense of wellbeing of local older, disabled and vulnerable people, as well as contributing to more cohesive, friendlier and safer communities. The Home Buddies have reported improvements in their own health, outlook on life, self esteem and confidence as well as a greater sense of being a valued member of the community.

How has success been measured?

An internal evaluation of the Home Buddy Scheme was carried out over a three month period with participants of the Scheme and the Home Buddies. Using a questionnaire approach with both groups the evaluation sought to assess the impact of the Scheme on the participants and their families, the benefits of the Scheme for both groups, level of job satisfaction for the Home Buddies and to identify areas for service improvement.

"I like the fact that I go in and make a difference – it feels good."

What are the strengths and challenges?

The Scheme allows for locally based support and care plans to be developed for older, disabled and vulnerable people's individual needs. The service has resulted in a number of adults being able to stay in their own homes for longer than may otherwise have been possible. The energy of the Home Buddies and their willingness to help were also recognised as strengths of the Scheme by participants.

During their time with the Home Buddy Scheme the young people involved have the opportunity to undertake certified educational training and complete an SVQ Health and Social Care Level 2. Of the four current Home Buddies, two are nearing completion of Level 2 and two are in the process of completing Level 3. Previous Home Buddies, due to the qualifications and experience gained while working with the Scheme, have moved into full time employment in nursing homes and working with children with additional needs. The Scheme also provides opportunities for youth volunteers to work alongside the Home Buddies, many of whom have also moved onto positive destinations including full time work in the social care sector and further education.

The intergenerational theme underpinning the Scheme has brought older and younger people together in a mutually beneficial way. The participants of the Scheme look forward to the Home Buddies visits and the help they receive in their own homes; the Home Buddies have been able to learn about themselves, raise their aspirations, broaden their understanding of others and of the society in which they live, whilst simultaneously developing and extending their social skills, educational opportunities, experiences, and relationships in the process.

The Scheme has also had a wider positive community impact by improving community cohesion, increasing civic participation and pride in the local area. The intergenerational theme of the Scheme has improved perceptions of young and old

“The Home Buddies are invaluable – they build the links and relationships.”

people and led to a reduction in negative stereotyping of both groups.

The Scheme is dependent on external funding and staff reported the need to continually seek funding as a major ongoing challenge. Funding has enabled the Home Buddy Scheme to be provided to the local

community but it has also constrained how much the project can do: with more funding the Home Buddy Scheme could see more people, provide a wider range of services and extend the geographical area it covers.

Despite a high demand for the service there is a requirement to ensure the programme remains manageable. Continuity is important for the participants and it remains important to deliver a personal and individually tailored service to each participant the project engages with and supports.

From a personal perspective The Zone staff and Home Buddies have gained satisfaction from knowing that they are helping people and that the participants are safe within their home and are more trusting of younger people. On the other hand, Home Buddies expressed that it can be upsetting to see people living in social isolation. Participants in the Scheme spoke of their gratitude for the service and the help they have received. Many also spoke of the *“tremendous”* difference it has made to their lives to know that someone is on hand to help them and to provide them with companionship.

GalGael Navigate Life Programme





GalGael Navigate Life Programme

is a twelve week programme aimed at people with a background in addiction and complex forms of exclusion to improve physical and emotional health and to increase resilience to sustain this transformation and move on in life with purpose. The GalGael community provides a place to work, attitudinal and practical tools and basic respect for others delivered through the medium of traditional crafts including wood working.

What are the aims and objectives?

GalGael's core purpose is *"to initiate social, cultural and ecological renewal projects, re-visioning inclusive forms of peoplehood, establish an identity that builds resilience and embodies shared values, and community in modern Scotland"*.

The programme empowers people to navigate life with dignity through expanded means of meeting their needs in life-enhancing ways and so enabling them to become more socially, culturally and economically engaged with their community. The project focuses on connecting people by giving them a sense of purpose and belonging and a way to contribute to society.

"It's about progression rather than diversion."

Why was the project set up?

In the mid 1990s, Colin MacLeod, founder of the project, along with a group of unemployed people, set about trying to re-establish a sense of 'peoplehood' and 'belonging' for local people and a reconnection to the community and the land. GalGael was formally established in March 1997, achieved charitable status in 1999 and employed staff from 2000. Participants started coming to the project in 1999/2000 due to funding from Scottish Natural Heritage. The project moved into its current premises in Govan in December 2004. *The Navigate the Future* project was launched in the same year. The *Navigate Life* programme is now the main focus of GalGael's work.

The project recognises people's inner need to contribute their creativity to their community as well as their outer need for a living wage.⁷ The work of the project is founded on the belief that we all have something to contribute both to our local economy and our local community.

Who are the participants and the partners?

GalGael works with adults (16 to 65 years) who are long term unemployed and who live in South West of Glasgow. Many participants experience complex and often multiple forms of deprivation and exclusion including addictions, homelessness, lack of qualifications, mental health issues, and criminal justice involvement. The majority of participants are male and aged between 25 and 45. The project works with 90 to 100 participants per year. Participants take part in a twelve week programme and attend GalGael for three and half days per week during this period.

The project is based in Govan, an area of Glasgow which has been deeply affected by the decline shipbuilding industries, and *“where many individuals and families in the community have been left without work and meaning”*. The programme is delivered from the project base in Govan, and complemented by activities in a rural bothy, Barmaddy Farm at Loch Awe, which provides a breathing space from city life.

“It needn't be about what people are lacking.”

The project works in partnership with a small number of organisations including Cardonald College and is funded by European Social Fund, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Henry Smith Fund, Integrated Grant Fund, and Garfield West. By engaging in local networks, the project ensures appropriate partnerships are formed to provide the full set of services and joined up interventions that participants require to progress towards the labour market.

GalGael Trust is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. The organisation is managed day-to-day by a staff-based management team responsible to the Board of Directors who provide the organisation with governance and strategic direction. Six voluntary members on the Board of Directors bring a breadth of skills and experience pivotal to the development of the organisation.

GalGael employs seven full time staff and one part time employee, alongside 15 regular and 20 occasional volunteers.

What does the project do?

GalGael has become best known for building and sailing wooden boats in celebration of Scotland's heritage. GalGael seeks to bring people alive to their surroundings and environment.



⁷ 'Living wage' - a wage level that allows the earner to afford adequate shelter, food and the other necessities of life and that takes into account the area-specific cost of living. The goal of the living wage is to allow employees to earn enough income for a satisfactory standard of living.

In doing so the project allows people to see a new sense of self and a deeper understanding of who they are and provides the tools to help people overcome future challenges and times of adversity.

“The Navigate Life method is simple; give people a place to work, tools both attitudinal and practical and some basic respect on the rest comes naturally.” In this way the project creates a new relationship between what is important and valued in both the person and materials they work with. Based on a strong “learning is doing” method and partly inspired by the old apprenticeship system, the programme shifts focus from the individual and their issues and onto the creative task they are engaged with.

Working with natural materials such as wood, stone and metal, Navigate Life uses traditional skills as a vehicle to transfer new skills and get into good life habits, and enables participants to both *“learn and earn”*. The project creates, through the course of a week, varying conditions where different kinds of learning can take place in natural and inclusive contexts. Small furniture projects provide a practical focus while other transformations get to work on deeper personal levels. At the same time

as creating an object of beauty that will enrich their home environment or serve as a gift to repair family relationships, participants find a sense of worth and achievement.

“Wood working is a medium for everything else that goes on.”

A number of steps are involved in the 12 week programme including a short introduction to tools, materials and health and safety; completion

of the SQA Introduction to Woodwork units verified by Cardonald College; a small personal furniture project and involvement in one of a wide variety of projects and commissions. For many participants this may be the first qualification ever gained, the first time they have finished anything or demonstrated their own creative potential and had the opportunity to work as part of a team.

The distance travelled during the 12 weeks by participants varies widely depending on personal circumstances. For some, completing the 12 week course is a significant achievement in itself. For others, the course is all they need to support them into employment or further education. A number of participants continue to volunteer with GalGael after the programme and for some, whilst the balance of what they receive to what they give back has immeasurably changed; they continue to experience barriers to moving into more traditional forms of employment.

“It gives you pride in what you have achieved and in what you’ve made.”

At the end of the 12 weeks each individual is presented with a certificate stating the qualities they have demonstrated, their SQA certificate, a tool kit and their journal. Outgoing participants are invited to present



incoming participants with a keepsake box they have made for them, bringing things full cycle. At this stage the participant has earned membership of the 'Clanship' and this is celebrated.

The Clanship provides a package of further support and benefits including cultural and natural heritage excursions, evening learning gatherings and celebrations, the opportunity to share skills

and play a peer support role for new participants, to sail the GalGael boats, and make use of the GalGael bothy – activities which further enrich the participants' sense of belonging, positive forms of identity and positive values.

It is recognised that Navigate Life will, for many, be one of several interventions they engage with in heading for an improved quality of life. A 12 week programme is not going to resolve all of the issues faced by participants but instead represents the start of a much longer journey that often takes years. Referrals to GalGael and the Navigate Life programme come from range of statutory and voluntary sector organisations including a local addictions team, the Scottish Association for Mental Health, a Social Work Criminal Justice Team, homeless projects and the South West Bridging Service. Self referrals make up forty per cent of intakes.

Has the approach changed over time?

The success of GalGael has come from continual reflective practice, looking at what has worked and why, building on this and doing more of it. Some of the most valuable project outcomes have been unintended. The ethos of GalGael is based on an expectation of mutual effort: the project creates the environment and the participants do the rest.

The 12 week programme was devised in the knowledge that the reality for many experiencing multiple deprivation is that the road to inclusion can be a long one taking several years, and even longer in some cases. The programme was shortened from what was initially a 24 week programme to 12 weeks within the wider context of GalGael's recovery community ('the Clanship'). The European Social Fund contribution concludes at the end of April 2012. GalGael are now developing plans for a new programme called '*Journey On*' with a greater focus on volunteering opportunities.



The new programme plans to move to a phased attendance approach with participants initially attending for three days per week, gradually reducing to one day per week, with a longer period of engagement with the project. This is in response to the finding that some participants develop a dependency with the project after their 12 week placement.

Furthermore, the SVQ course element was initially delivered after the personal project but following a review session to examine the high drop-out rate at this part of the programme, the staff assessed that the situation would be improved by delivering the SVQ element first, thereby improving skills and confidence before attempting a personal project and increasing motivation to complete the training. When implemented in April 2006, this change had a dramatic effect on attendance and SVQ completion (from 23% to 56% of those starting course).

Alongside continual reflection and development of the activities and programmes offered, plans are also underway to further develop the community workshop. Restoration of the building will allow the project to improve the current facilities and expand the range of activities already taking place, in particular the 'light crafts' such as leather work, basket-making, spinning and weaving. It is hoped that these plans will help to increase the number of females engaging with the project. GalGael also has a newly emerging social enterprise, GalGael Timber, which, with support from the Third Sector Enterprise Fund, it is hoped will make a significant contribution to the future financial sustainability of GalGael.

In what way is the approach 'asset based'?

GalGael's work is founded in the belief that we all have something to contribute both to our local economy and our local community. The project provides people with work to do and a place of work within the context of a supportive community. The project is focused on understanding and navigating life with dignity through supporting the participants' needs in life-enhancing ways thereby enabling them to become more socially, culturally and economically engaged with their community.

The GalGael ethos is clearly underpinned by asset principles. The project states that it cannot always protect participants from life's storms but offers a 'safe harbour'.

"GalGael offers a place of acceptance where participants can experience a sense of belonging and self worth. It helps them to put down anchor points from which they can begin to navigate away from a battered and broken sense of self and re-orientate their lives, out of crisis, and issues such as addiction, homelessness, previous convictions, mental ill health and persistent unemployment towards an enriched quality of life."

Navigate Life is described as a learning community rather than a training programme. GalGael provides a community of creative people who come together to cooperatively meet some of our inherent needs, our shared need for acceptance, to learn new skills, to work, to contribute our creativity, and to find friendship. Membership of the community challenges, inspires and empowers individuals, enabling them to find the best within themselves.

"The word 'community' is over used. When you see real community it's overwhelming."

The project uses natural materials as a medium to develop new tangible physical skills, underpinned by the development of softer personal skills such as interaction, mutual support, relationships and community spirit. Navigate Life is focused on the development and creation of new assets and responsibilities through learning opportunities, team working and the development of life skills. The project believes that creating a collective sense of responsibility leads to a sense of worth and empowerment. Confidence building and a sense of purpose is intrinsic to all project activities.

How has success been measured?

The impact of Navigate Life on *"giving people their lives back"* is hard to measure as it is about capturing a quality of life experience for participants and assessing 'softer outcomes'.

"We're at the benches building relationships."

On entering GalGael, the Progression Support Officer interviews and encourages each participant to score themselves in terms of core

skills, life skills and work skills, to establish a record of each participants' starting point. Ongoing assessment and review of participants is carried out during their time on the programme. Assessment and review is also used as a meaningful and motivational tool that helps participants to visualise their own progress and journey.

Over a five year period (2009-2014) the programme wishes to achieve the outcomes below:

- 300 people with backgrounds in addiction and other forms of exclusion will have improved physical, mental and emotional health and the resilience to sustain this transformation, leaving behind negative lifestyles and moving on in life with purpose.
- 300 disadvantaged people will have had the opportunity to find their strengths and gain a broad and relevant range of transferable skills that will equip them for life's journey as learners and earners.

A wide range of assessment tools are used including individual participant details and baseline records, induction sheets, participants' barriers to inclusion; individual learning plan/life map; activity sheets; participant progress sheets; work plans; training schedules; participant evaluation sheets and follow up of participant outcomes.

What are the strengths and challenges?

GalGael works to empower and support people to find their way in life by giving them a sense of purpose and belonging and a way to contribute to society, socially, culturally and economically. In the past four years, 246 people have completed the programme with 160 people acquiring an SVQ certificate, for many their first qualification. Of this, 21 people have progressed into employment, 15 into further education or training and 44 into volunteering. Furthermore, 82% of participants said their confidence had improved while on the course, 88% stated improved motivation and 76% said their outlook on life was more positive. Improvements in mental health, physical health and social health are reported by the majority of participants who engage with the project. While harder outcomes such as employment and further education are comparatively low, these figures are concurrent with the reality that for many participants the road to positive destinations are long and GalGael is often the first step on the employability pathway. The current financial climate has had an impact on the opportunities available for participants – due to the limited options for progression it can be difficult to keep up motivation and hope.

Funding was identified as an ongoing challenge for the project. The demand for project places is increasing alongside a decrease in funding. Project staff highlighted concern about the changing nature of funding towards service level agreements and the need to fit into predefined agendas which constrains innovation and creativity and continuity of the services that can be provided. The challenges associated with funding have also stretched staffing capacity and the resources that are available,



with little time available to pursue emerging work. Furthermore, due to the nature of the project in providing training in traditional skills, health and safety is an ongoing challenge.

The working relationship between statutory organisations and voluntary associations was also acknowledged as

a barrier to ongoing delivery of the project. Staff felt that large statutory organisations do not always understand how voluntary organisations work and may insist on reducing funding over time with the expectation that the project should be income generating and self sustaining. Project staff feel that GalGael is helping to reduce the burden on statutory services and there is a need for the project to better translate the short and long term benefits of the project on statutory services and the associated funding implications.

On a personal level, staff expressed satisfaction and pride in being part of a big family. The unique nature of the project – the provision of a community for people to work, eat, learn and share together – was highlighted as a setting for people to help each other through an informal network of support. Staff also articulated their sense of fulfilment from the rich cultural mix of the project and spoke of how this can be

powerful for people who have not historically mixed within their communities, challenging preconceived ideas about people and helping to break down barriers between people.

“It’s given me energy and confidence.”

Participants expressed appreciation and gratitude for the project and the encouragement, help and support they received. Participants spoke of the importance of GalGael in providing a new purpose in life, a structure to the day, new skills and relationships. Participants also highlighted their pleasure and enjoyment from being able to take part in the project excursions which offer the opportunity to visit new places and to see the natural beauty of Scotland.

StobsWELLbeing





StobsWELLbeing

is the name of the Equally Well test site in Dundee. The project is focused on improving community wellbeing and includes a mental health literacy programme, community picnics in the local park, a social prescribing pilot and community outreach work.

What are the aims and objectives?

StobsWELLbeing endeavours for people to experience fewer inequalities and have better mental wellbeing. The test site also aims to influence relevant local and national policies and service provision.

The test site aims to ensure that:

- Actions are focused on raising the awareness of inequalities, within the context of how people live, ensuring people are placed at the heart of the approach.
- Focus is placed on taking a community development approach.
- Local services are well equipped to talk about mental health and wellbeing.
- Community engagement processes bring benefits for local people and service delivery.
- Existing working relationships are improved and enhanced.

Why was the project set up? How has the approach changed over time?

The Equally Well report, published in June 2008 by the Scottish Government's Ministerial Task Force on Health Inequalities,⁸ was followed by a national implementation plan. Dundee was successful in being chosen by the Government as one of eight test sites across Scotland linked to Equally Well priorities. Equally Well advocates tackling health inequalities by addressing the wider determinants of health and wellbeing as well as making improvements in health care services and treatment. The Dundee Equally Well Core Group recommended the area of Stobswell as the test site community for the city.

⁸ Scottish Government. Equally Well. Report of the Ministerial Task Force on Health Inequalities. Scottish Government, Edinburgh; 2008.

The work of the test site began in November 2008 and was funded until the end of March 2012. The StobsWELLbeing proposal built on detailed discussions on mental wellbeing that had taken place over a number of years in Dundee with a broad range of local and strategic partners. Test site status was seen as an opportunity to enhance and capture local aspirations to focus more closely on community mental health and wellbeing.

“No matter how big a project is it won’t cut it. We need services to change.”

Who are the participants and the partners?

Located in the Stobswell area of Dundee, StobsWELLbeing is an approach to improving the mental wellbeing of the whole community. Local service providers are the intended audience of the test site activity, with a clear focus on addressing

how they work with local people. The area of Stobswell has both diverse and stable elements and a multi-ethnic population. The community has a range of community facilities, services and established groups which the test site has been able to work with.

The work of the test site is overseen and guided by a senior partnership, the Equally Well Core Group, which is chaired by Dundee Community Health Partnership and reports on test site progress to Healthy Dundee, the strategic group for the Health and Wellbeing theme in the Community Planning Partnership. Operational responsibility for the work of the test site is assigned to the working group, StobsWELLbeing, which is made up of services working in the Stobswell area and chaired by the test site Lead Officer, who is employed by Dundee City Council and also works with the Dundee Healthy Living Initiative.

The StobsWELLbeing group generated further working groups to implement the delivery of test site activities. These working groups aim to develop new ways of promoting and protecting mental wellbeing in the community. From the outset, the test site has been embedded in strategic planning processes.

What does the project do?

With the aim of improving community wellbeing in Stobswell, close links have been established between the test site team and local service providers taking forward regeneration and other locally focused work and activities. The working group combining the Equally Well test site and these local services and activities is called StobsWELLbeing. This team work closely with a wide range of local workers and the community to identify influences, indicators and assets for mental wellbeing and to raise awareness of, and build capacity for, mental health improvement. The test site takes a complementary approach by providing local evidence of need and supporting a process of ‘learning by doing’ with services.

The test site is building on and extending the work of existing organisations, some of which do not have a direct mental health improvement role but have the potential to impact on the mental wellbeing of the people they work with. The test site also assists mainstream services in identifying and making small changes that will make a big difference to their users' wellbeing. A number of specific actions have been undertaken including working with service providers and local people to increase awareness of steps that can be taken to protect and promote mental wellbeing, supporting the establishment of a model of social prescribing, and developing indicators to measure community mental wellbeing.

“Starting where people are and starting where services are.”

“It’s about more than just interventions, we took an overall approach.”

The test site has also facilitated a community engagement process to enable local people to identify the factors influencing their mental wellbeing, issues of common concern and/or need, and to identify local priorities for action. The test site sought to involve local people from the outset in developing the

work of StobsWELLbeing and gives local services and practitioners a better and shared understanding of the community’s assets, influences on wellbeing and priorities for improvement.

The work of the test site has taken people on a local journey, helping them see that mental wellbeing is about them – integrating mental wellbeing across systems, supporting people to talk the language of mental wellbeing and taking a practical approach

An extensive community consultation process formed the basis for the identification and development of a range of local activities, including ‘Picnics in the Park’, a mental health literacy programme, social prescribing, and community outreach work to residents who would not usually engage in local activities.





Picnics in the Park

Initial community engagement highlighted underutilisation of the regenerated local park. The StobsWELLbeing group proposed the formation of 'Picnics in the Park' as a means of bringing the community together to share in green space activities to promote community mental wellbeing. Ten organisations took part and four picnics were held in summer 2010 with varying degrees of success due to weather conditions. The events were successful in encouraging

social interaction, partnership working and better use of green space. The test site continued to organise picnics throughout 2011/12 and has now supported local organisations to take the lead, which has ensured that the picnics will become a sustained series of local community events.

Mental health literacy programme

The mental health literacy programme involves supporting local people and service providers to be aware of how to promote and protect mental wellbeing and to reduce the stigma surrounding mental ill health. A range of information and awareness raising sessions have been held with varying success. Sessions have included:

- Mind Yir Heid;
- drugs and drug use;
- mental illness, support and recovery; and
- Scotland's Mental Health First Aid.

Social prescribing scheme

The test site has developed and implemented a model of social prescribing⁹ in one medical centre located in the Stobswell area. This has allowed patients with poor mental wellbeing to be offered non-clinical methods of support. For example, an individual who presents at their GP surgery with low mood caused by social isolation may be signposted to a community group or organisation. The test site recognised that the scheme requires evaluation to assess whether the projected outcomes are being achieved and if they can be attributed to the intervention. An external evaluation is in place.

⁹ Social prescribing is a method of impacting on the wider determinants of health through linking people with health problems or social, emotional or practical needs to a range of local, non-medical sources of help and support in the community often provided by the voluntary and community sector that have signed up to the scheme.

Community outreach work

The community outreach work of the test site aims to reach local residents who live in the most disadvantaged part of StobsWell, and who may not usually get involved in local community activities. The outreach programme attempts to engage these residents in meaningful activity and to promote the range of activities available for local people. This work has involved door step calling and facilitating community based social events.

Outreach workers have spent time in communal back gardens as a way of meeting and speaking with people. Initiating these community conversations led to garden tidy ups and tree planting in back gardens with young people and older people working together, which built connections across generations.

In what way is the approach 'asset based'?

StobsWELLbeing started with the assets and resources already existing in the community and is working to enhance them for the benefit of the whole community, specifically focusing on the importance of good mental wellbeing. The test site invests in local people as active participants, recognising that they contribute to sustainable, vibrant and healthy communities and that *"people are always the biggest asset"*. Furthermore the test site acknowledges the existing elements of the community which could be better utilised and the important role local services and organisations play as assets. The approach taken by the test site supports the changing role of public services from top-down delivery to a model of co-production.

The approach taken by StobsWELLbeing supports new assets to be built through a range of activities and partnerships – a mental health literacy programme, the social prescribing approach and the building of new relationships between local residents and between the local community and local services. The test site brings people together across the board and has been built on integrating existing services along with *"the voices of local people"*. Furthermore, the test site seeks to reduce stigma and to challenge people's expectations of and attitudes towards mental illness.

"Working better in partnership together and recognising and enhancing wellbeing locally."

"Although the test site had little financial assets attached, we had people, relationships, time, local knowledge, enthusiasm..."

Through the activities delivered by the test site, the community has been brought together and new relationships and friendships have been built. This has resulted in creating stronger communities and greater cohesion between neighbours.

“Investing real time, effort and sincerity takes a slow burn approach.”

How has success been measured?

The work of the test site has been subject to ongoing evaluation since 2010 with measurement focused on community and service provider engagement and increased awareness of mental wellbeing and its determinants.

Evaluation support is provided by Dundee University. The evaluation involves service providers, staff and user groups and specifically investigates the processes which have been put in place and range of events that have taken place. The evaluation has included an online survey of test site stakeholders and service providers, analysis of wellbeing scores from 2009 and 2010 and tests of the levels of success of test site strategies. The second year of the evaluation included an assessment of the effects of the test site on capacity building, practice and behaviour changes and mental wellbeing changes in the Stobswell community.

With support from Health Scotland and the University of Edinburgh Business School, the test site also produced a theory of change diagram which highlights the test site contribution to the process of engagement, awareness and capacity building, which results in the long term outputs and outcomes for the project and associated services.

What are the strengths and challenges?

StobsWELLbeing set out to improve community mental health and wellbeing by placing a focus on the determinants of health inequalities and by providing support to the local community and service providers to address them. By taking a very local focus and hands on approach, the work of test site is demystifying mental ill health and enhancing the importance of mental wellbeing.

The responsive nature of the test site, effective partnership working and information sharing across sectors has allowed StobsWELLbeing to flourish and gain recognition of its community led ways of working. Working in partnership with a diverse range of people and organisations has ensured that engagement has been meaningful. The balanced approach of the test site within a range of local action – ***“not doing but supporting”*** – is based on local evidence and addresses a locally identified need. The work has linked into existing structures and built capacity in local people and service providers.

“I’ve learned a lot about how to support services and do things in different ways.”

The test site is not a ‘project’ as no additional resources have been put into the area as a result of the test site work. Although a small amount of funding has been provided by the Scottish Government for staff time, the approach taken has primarily been about more effective working between people and services in Stobswell. There

is a continued focus on the legacy of the work going forward and in sustaining the momentum created by the work of the test site.

Whilst it is recognised there is still much to be done, it is felt that a step in the right direction has been taken. Getting 'buy in' from some partners was highlighted as a challenge alongside ensuring sustainable investment for the future. The lack of attendees at some of the mental health literacy sessions was also identified as a barrier to being able to raise awareness of factors which can both promote and protect mental wellbeing amongst local people and service providers.

On a personal basis, staff expressed that the test site allowed them to have the freedom to work differently, to do different types of things and to focus on the determinants of health. On the other hand, test site staff reflected that the work was stressful at times. A tension between the need to make progress within the time limited nature of the test site and allowing the work of the test site to be led by local partners and the community was also felt.

Staff spoke of the benefits of working more closely with people from other services. They also value the transferable skills they have gained around health equity and on how to engage meaningfully with local people, allowing them to take the lead and supporting them in a receptive and responsive way.



Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust





Healthy n Happy

Community Development Trust

Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust

is a community-led health organisation which engages with local communities and responds to the issues they identify as priorities. Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust is an umbrella organisation which hosts a range of innovative and creative activities, projects and programmes to support local people with issues such as poor health, poverty, isolation and lack of aspiration and opportunity.

What are the aims and objectives?

The aim of the Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust is to provide local people with opportunities to take an active part in improving their lives and ensuring their own, their family's and their community's health and wellbeing.

The organisation is based on a social model of health and takes a community development approach to understanding and responding to health issues and needs identified by the local communities of Cambuslang and Rutherglen. By doing so it works with local people to improve lives and to support the development of personal capacity and resources.

The Community Development Trust is working towards achieving a number of strategic aims. These have been developed and agreed through a broad strategic business planning process which included consultation with local people.

- Healthy and resilient individuals, families and communities.
- Increased social capital and capacity.
- Skilled, knowledgeable and informed people, communities and businesses.
- Confident motivated, productive communities and responsive services and agencies.
- Sustainable, independent, fresh and creative activities and services.
- Inclusive and comprehensive local service provision and approaches which are responsive, relevant and efficient.

Why was the initiative set up? How has the approach changed over time?

Cambuslang and Rutherglen Community Health Initiative (CHI) was established in 2004 as a result of a merger of the Healthy Living Initiative and the Cambuslang and Rutherglen Health and Food Project (CHAF). The following year they formally changed their name to Healthy 'n' Happy Ltd although still trading as CHI locally. The merged organisation has operated as a development trust since its inception and this year has re-branded as Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust, an umbrella organisation comprising the current CHI, Camglen Community Radio and Healthy 'n' Happy Enterprises.

Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust was one of Scotland's original 46 Healthy Living Centres funded by the New Opportunities Fund and key local partners. The Community Development Trust works strategically and operationally in response to both locally identified need and national policy priorities.

The Community Development Trust has developed through 12 years of experience gained from the original two local organisations and continues to respond to the health issues, needs and areas of interest of local people.



Who are the participants and the partners?

Working with and for the residents of Cambuslang and Rutherglen, a population of 57,000 people, the Community Development Trust takes a whole community approach and involvement is not constrained by geography or eligibility criteria.

“They work with everybody across the community on all aspects of life.”

The Community Development Trust has partnership working at the centre and works with everybody across the community on every aspect of life.

Healthy ‘n’ Happy Community Development Trust currently has 11 full time and two part time members of staff,

around 42 sessional workers and over 100 active volunteers. Between April 2010 and March 2011, Healthy ‘n’ Happy Community Development Trust worked with over 12,000 people across the whole organisation, with numbers growing annually.

Working in partnership with local people, existing community, voluntary and statutory organisations including NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, South Lanarkshire Community Health Partnership and South Lanarkshire Council, the Community Development Trust is overseen by a dedicated and committed Board of Directors all of whom live within the local community.

What does the initiative do?

Working with people from the local communities of Cambuslang and Rutherglen, and taking a community development approach to health improvement, the Community Development Trust seeks to complement and add to existing local strategies and services. The Community Development Trust *“acts as the glue”* which brings local people, services and agencies together. This purpose is to ensure local participation in and influence on decision-making, and leading to more responsive services. Local people’s involvement in all aspects of the organisation, combined with ongoing stakeholder engagement, is key to maintaining a responsive and successful community led health improvement organisation.

“We are by and for local people. We have roots in the community going back generations.”

Healthy ‘n’ Happy Community Development Trust is underpinned by the values:

- People are the experts on the health and wellbeing of their communities and our services and support are based on needs identified by local people.
- We need to work together to achieve change.
- Active and non-judgemental listening.

- Everyone should have the opportunity to improve their health.
- Poverty is not just material.

The Community Development Trust works with the community by encouraging local people to build and develop confidence, experience and skills; by raising awareness about the choices available to people; supporting individuals and community groups to exercise power and influence; working in partnership with other agencies on behalf of the community; facilitating links between individuals, community groups and statutory agencies; supporting continuous learning and development; and working to make a lasting difference.

“It really makes a difference having something locally that can help with so many things.”

Healthy ‘n’ Happy Community Development Trust provides a diverse range of programmes to ensure that local people have a choice in what they get involved in and how they get involved. The work of the organisation

is delivered strategically and operationally through a range of activities and services within six service areas. These areas of work are based on needs that have been identified through extensive work with stakeholders.

1. Supporting Communities – Consultation, Engagement and Development
2. Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing
3. Promoting Healthy Choices
4. Community Broadcasting and Digital Media
5. Volunteering Opportunities and Supported Placements
6. Family Health and Resilience.

Activities under these six themes include, as a minimum, fitness and nutrition programmes; mental and emotional health and wellbeing programmes; stress management services; group activities that help build productive and supportive social networks to maintain good health and wellbeing; community development programmes that contribute to community wellbeing, increased intergenerational understanding, improved social and family relationships; family fun days; weekly fruit barras and gardening projects; and open doors days where local adults can learn about and access the range of opportunities and services provided by the Community Development Trust.

The organisation’s extensive volunteering programme allows local people to become more involved, skilled, confident and less stigmatised, through a range of activities

which support and build local involvement and promote health and wellbeing. The Community Development Trust strives to empower local people and encourages the volunteers to take ownership of the projects that they are involved in. Volunteers are also recognised as a valuable asset to the wider organisation.

Camglen Community Radio is a volunteer-led community radio station, 'made by the community for the community' and is one of the volunteering opportunities offered by Community Development Trust. The radio station has over 80 volunteers, aged from 10 to 70 years old, and is supported by a small number of staff. Volunteers are involved in key positions of responsibility including supervising other volunteers, script writing, audio editing, radio presenting, broadcasting and hosting road shows. This approach has built local ownership of the radio station and has increased confidence and sense of belonging and supported the development of new skills for local people whilst recognising their collective abilities. The station further demonstrates the willingness of local organisations and families to be involved in community activity. In conjunction with North Glasgow College, Camglen Community Radio also delivers a schools training programme and the opportunity to study for a certified qualification in Radio Production.

Led successfully by local residents and supported fully by local stakeholders, Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust has achieved national and international recognition of its progress and success in reaching out to those in the community who are most in need.

In what way is the approach 'asset based'?

Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust provides a range of activities, resources and information, workshops, and volunteering opportunities through a number of themes of work. The work of the organisation spans all ages and is based on locally identified priorities. Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust offers choice both in terms of what is available for local people to get involved in and also how they can get involved. The approach is flexible, responsive, friendly and wide reaching. Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust aims to inspire and empower local people and their families to control their futures. The Community Development Trust sets out to increase the confidence and self esteem of local people, enhance individual and community connections, equip local people with core skills to cope better, manage stress and anxiety, reduce stigma, improve and sustain health and wellbeing, and ensure that structures and networks are in place to enable people to have a stronger voice in local decision making.

Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust takes a whole community approach for the benefit of the residents of Cambuslang and Rutherglen through the provision of recreation and leisure opportunities, by offering a range of volunteering opportunities

"I wanted to be able to help somebody else to feel better. It's nice to give something back."

and initiatives, and by providing educational and work orientated skills development and links to training and education. Activities also include a range of social activities and fun family events to bring the community together to encourage social interaction, physical and mental wellbeing and promote community cohesion.

By utilising and building on the energy, skills, strengths and experiences of local people, Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust has established a large group of volunteers of all ages. The volunteers have reported multiple benefits from their involvement including better relationships, improved sense of community and local participation, better outlook on life and improved health and wellbeing. The enthusiasm of the volunteers is encouraging to new volunteer team members and also to their families and the wider community.

How has success been measured?

Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust has comprehensive monitoring and evaluation systems in place. Internal evaluation using LEAP (Learning, Evaluation and Planning) for Health enables planning and evaluation in partnership with communities. Indicators of success have been agreed and established and evidence is gathered on an ongoing basis. Using a number of different techniques to collect feedback from participants (including tailored questionnaires, participatory appraisal techniques, and story gathering) the organisation regularly reviews and monitors its work and responds with ongoing adjustments as required. Feedback to participants and the wider community is provided through newsletter updates and publications, focus groups and events, and ongoing two-way engagement.

Independent evaluation of the organisation was carried in December 2006 and an external interim evaluation was carried out in September 2007. External evaluation has recently been completed on one of CHI's Healthy Choices programmes funded by NHS Lanarkshire's Tobacco Prevention and Education programme. The "It's Your Choice" partnership has been externally evaluated and also won a "Champ" Award in recognition of its successes. The organisation has also been recently involved in an external economic and health impact analysis.

What are the strengths and challenges?

Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust is a locally based service which is active throughout the community across a wide range of life improvement, health and wellbeing areas of work, reaching and engaging with local people in over 50 local outreach venues each year. A wide range of subject matters are covered, 84 different volunteering opportunities are offered and people are engaged where they are and how they want to be. Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust works 'with' people to develop a range of tangible skills and qualifications, alongside the softer skills of confidence, resilience, relationship building and social skills.

The organisation also works with community groups, organisations and individuals

to support local voices in local decision making and planning and to help to improve services. Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust has taken a joint lead role in the development of a local Health Improvement Action Plan and the delivery of subsequent actions. Further, the organisation has brought over £2million of funding into the local area over the last five years.

Over the two year period from October 2009 to September 2011 Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust provided information and education on alcohol awareness to 2,911 individuals and 63 businesses across the area, provided stress management support provided to 1,758 people through one-to-one sessions and group work, delivered training in mental health awareness and mental health first aid to 551 people and enabled access to quality affordable and healthy food through the ongoing development of volunteer led fruit barras.

Income and funding has been identified as an ongoing challenge for Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust. Staff expressed frustration at the short term nature of funding cycles but the need for a long term vision for the community. The Community Development Trust's whole community approach means the funding streams open to the Initiative are limited as funders often wish to target specific population groups based on need. Staff feel this approach to funding provision is *"backward looking"*. In response, the organisation has diversified its income sources to ensure that all that all activities and services offered are open to everyone. To further complement grant funding, the Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust have initiated a social enterprise trading subsidiary, Healthy and Happy Enterprises Ltd – a new approach to fundraising which aims to generate income for the benefit of the wider community.

Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust acknowledges that challenges do present themselves through their model of working. The organisation aims to work alongside the local community which for many local people is a new approach and some do not fully appreciate that they have a key role to play and important contribution to make in their involvement with Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust.



On a personal level, staff expressed a high level of job satisfaction and pride in working for the local community. They felt positive about the Community Development Trust's approach, were committed and gained personal fulfilment from their work. The energy and enthusiasm of the local community to get involved was also discussed as was the value of working with mainstream services on behalf of the community.

Participants expressed high levels of appreciation and gratitude for the Initiative – the encouragement, help and support they had received through their involvement with Healthy 'n' Happy Community Development Trust had been greatly beneficial. Participants also highlighted the new skills and hope that they had developed particularly in relation to stress, anxiety and coping, and the improved family relationships and new friendships formed.

Urban Roots





Urban Roots

is a community-led organisation committed to working with local people on projects that improve the environment and health of the area through a range of activities. The project tackles food, energy and transport issues within the broader context of climate change and community resilience.

What are the aims and objectives?

The aim of Urban Roots is to inspire people and communities to connect with nature and take practical action that tackles the root causes of climate change.

Urban Roots' work is underpinned by the belief that, with the earth's climate and ecosystems under strain from the impact of human activity, local people working collectively can find solutions and offer a sustainable alternative by building greater community self reliance and self sufficiency.



In the long term, the project aims to build a new community resource using sustainable eco-build methods and renewable technologies where people can share skills and knowledge. Urban Roots is part of a growing movement developing urban agriculture and local food growing based on permaculture methods in partnership with other similar organisations.

Why was the project set up? Has the approach changed over time?

Urban Roots evolved from the Toryglen Gardening Club which was founded in 2004 by three local people who had a shared desire to improve the area. Within five years, and with funding secured through the Fairshare

Trust in 2007 to employ a Development Officer, Toryglen Gardening Club created not only a range of community gardens in the area, but also several other community projects designed to raise awareness about environmental issues, make the area more environmentally sustainable and self sufficient, and create a more pleasant and health promoting place to live. Urban Roots was officially launched in June 2009. Urban Roots is based in the Toryglen Community Base, a one-stop shop hosting various agencies which offer services for people living in this area.

The project has developed over time and continues to change and adapt in response to local need and the wishes and ideas of the local community and volunteers to *"connect with what people want to do"*. The initial focus of the project was community gardening but over time this has broadened

to include environmental conservation, raising awareness of the contribution of the environment to health and wellbeing, local community development and regeneration, social inclusion, education, and the development of the local economy.

"We work with anybody and believe everybody is equal."

Who are the participants and the partners?

Urban Roots is based in Toryglen, in the south of Glasgow. Involvement in the project is not limited by geography or any eligibility criteria. The participants, a mixture of men and women, range in age from recent school leavers to people in their 60s. Up to half of all participants who attend regular activities are recognised as vulnerable with common issues including mental ill health, alcoholism and learning difficulties. The activities and courses provided attract a range of genuinely interested people and new volunteers come from this.

The project works closely with local resident groups and schools and nurseries to help them to develop their eco schools programmes, to deliver school garden and biodiversity projects, to provide climate change education and deliver environmental arts projects.

Urban Roots has four staff and up to 70 volunteers and works in partnership with Glasgow City Council, Friends of Kings Park, Transitions Scotland, Cassiltoun Housing Association, Battlefield Community Project, and many others, and is supported by and a range of funders.

What does the project do?

Urban Roots sets out to deliver projects that inspire and empower people to take positive steps to improve their environment and quality of life. Ongoing work focuses on community gardening, conservation and biodiversity, and climate change education. Threaded throughout this work are health, youth and arts themes. The project delivers and manages a wide range of activities for local community members, groups and schools.

These include:

- **Community gardening:** maintaining and developing five local community gardens around Toryglen; helping out in school and nursery gardens, building raised beds and keeping public spaces tidy; weekly fruit barra selling low cost, fresh fruit and vegetables at a local church.
- **Malls Mire Community Woodland:** once per week a team of volunteers work on this community nature reserve by managing woodlands, planting wildflowers, creating and improving pathways and access and also learning how to make small items out of birch and cherry with a woodworking expert.
- **Planet friendly living:** a wide variety of workshops for community groups, children and adults that look at some of the facts, causes and effects of climate change, and appropriate responses.
- **Eco-schools:** working closely with local schools signed up to the eco-schools awards programme: composting, food growing, wildflower, tree and hedge planting.
- **Kidz clubs:** spaces for young people to learn about the environment in a safe and friendly atmosphere.
- **Energy descent action plan:** helping the community to respond to a decline in the availability of cheap energy and to become more localised and self reliant.

The work of Urban Roots is celebrated each April at the local Blossom Festival with arts and crafts activities, plant sales, drama and music, storytelling workshops and discussions on climate change. Healthy food, using locally grown ingredients, is also provided. Power comes from Urban Roots' own renewable energy system.

“Having a nice outdoor space pulls people together and you can share what you know.”

From the outset the project has strived to involve local people. As time has gone on and the range of initiatives developed, the presence and visibility of the project has attracted interest and drawn people in. The project is an ***“initiative owned and run by local people”***, rooted in the local community with volunteers and trustees

living in the local area. Due to the high level of community involvement there has been little vandalism.

The work of the project depends on volunteers. Involvement brings about a range of benefits to those who volunteer including learning about health and wellbeing and a social element. Within an area in which people may feel marginalised and

“Ownership and empowerment of the local environment.”

are lacking in other outlets for their time and energies, these benefits are of particular importance.

Volunteer teams take on many different projects with Urban Roots such as transforming derelict or unused green spaces into thriving, blossoming community gardens where herbs and vegetables, fruit and flowers can be grown. This improves the attractiveness of the area and helps to create more used, social and safe places for the whole community. The project listens to people and is open to possibilities. Urban Roots encourages engagement with environmental arts as well as gardening – the project is not just about getting ones hands dirty.

“We work with what people are interested in.”

Urban Roots offers a range of courses which are delivered by project staff including ‘Grow Your Own Food’; ‘Cycling with Confidence’ and ‘Your Money, Your Planet’. Regular cooking courses, ‘Great Grub’, are also offered

along with general advice to help make the links between saving energy and reducing expenditure and the effect this has on the planet.

In what way is the approach ‘asset based’?

Urban Roots starts from where local people are to establish the issues that are important and relevant to them. This approach has led to the development of a range of initiatives. Urban Roots encourages people to take action on local environmental issues and utilises gardening and local projects to make the links to and raise awareness of wider global issues such as climate change.

Participants and volunteers confirm the wide therapeutic benefits of the project. Urban Roots offers the opportunity to spend time outdoors and to meet new people, as well as a sense of achievement. Volunteering outdoors and re-establishing a connection with the natural world brings additional benefits including increased physical activity, improved mental health and enhanced wellbeing as well as healthier eating. A number of project volunteers require additional support and the project offers a safe and structured place to work as part of a team, to make new friends, and to build confidence and new skills.

In addition, the wider community reaps benefits from the work of the project’s volunteers. The creation of a safe greenspace where none had existed previously represents a tangible improvement to the local physical infrastructure and a valuable community resource. Those volunteers who help to run the fruit barra or get involved in the Blossom Festival, have gained not only a sense of ownership and achievement but have also conferred benefits to the wider community. Urban Roots works to empower individuals by supporting them to build confidence

“We establish connections between people and the urban world and build connections with nature.”



and the development of new skills and assets. People learn general skills including how to use tools, and more specific skills such as dry stone dyking and first aid. A number of volunteers have gone on to further education courses and, for others, volunteering has encouraged them to consider routes back into employment.

The project starts

with the assets and resources in the community such as the woodland, open spaces and the people, and focuses on the wider community impact of the project for the common good. Furthermore, the project supports people to make changes for the better by enhancing their skills for resilience, relationships, and self esteem, through building mutually supportive networks and friendships which help people to make sense of their environment and to take control of their lives and make sustainable improvements.

How has success been measured?

Project activity and performance are regularly monitored and measured by means of assessment every two months. Each participant discusses and agrees what progress will look like for them, how they can be further supported and a personal development plan is put in place.

What are the strengths and challenges?

Urban Roots provides a flexible response to the wishes of each participant and strives to find an activity or area of interest that suits everybody in an inclusive nature. The project provides opportunities for outdoor work, development of new skills and social benefits through making friends and working together with others on a cause the participant believes in, thereby widening horizons and creating new opportunities and relationships. Urban Roots passes on environmental messages through a variety of routes in a non-judgmental, fun, creative and supportive way.

“We connect with what people want to do.”

Since the project’s establishment, Urban Roots has created and maintained over 100 square metres

of productive organic fruit and vegetable gardens in Toryglen which are managed weekly by local volunteers and supported by Urban Roots staff. The project has also created almost 150 square metres of food growing gardens at schools and with community groups. A lease for a further acre of land is currently being agreed with Glasgow City Council.

Furthermore, the project has increased awareness of local and global environmental issues and developed skills and confidence in over 70 volunteers by providing weekly volunteer opportunities in organic gardening and sustainable woodland management and offering learning experiences in organic horticulture, orchard care, composting, sustainable woodland management, healthy eating and cookery, climate change awareness and environmental crafts. Through these activities the project has brought people together, built community capacity and connections and broken down social and cultural barriers.

Uncertainty around future funding was identified as a challenge for the ongoing projects. Due to the current funding model, the project is working on a year-to-year basis making it difficult to plan for the future. Staff expressed frustration at the conflict between the short term nature of their funding and the long term plans they would like to put in place. As Urban Roots takes a whole community approach, identifying appropriate funding sources was raised as a difficulty as a number of funders have specific target audience criteria. The project is also currently considering a number of ways of generating income, including the sale of the produce grown.

The project strives to find a balance between supporting local vulnerable people with additional needs, providing experienced volunteers and staff to support them and providing a project for the whole community.

The area of Glasgow where Urban Roots is based also poses challenges for the project. The project community is divided physically by the road and socially by religion – the project plays a key role in breaking down barriers to bring people together. The area also has a diverse and transient resident population as Toryglen is home to a significant migrant and asylum seeker population. However, this population possesses significant assets in terms of experience, education and skills.

On a personal level, staff expressed high levels of job satisfaction and found their involvement in the project to be rewarding. Clear community connections have been built through the project and positive changes in the outlook of the residents of the area and the immediate physical environment are visible. Participants spoke of the importance of the project in bringing like minded people together and enhancing the sense of community. Participants expressed gratitude for the amount they have learned through the training courses and activities provided by Urban Roots.

Bute Produce





Bute Produce

is a local community garden which produces affordable, seasonal and local fruit and vegetables, volunteering and employment opportunities and a source of renewable energy on the Isle of Bute.

What are the aims and objectives?

The aim of the project is to develop a sustainable social enterprise which raises awareness and understanding of local food production and provides training, volunteering, employment and educational opportunities for the wider community. The project also produces affordable healthy fruit and vegetables, thereby reducing food miles and supporting the local economy.

Specifically the project aims to:

- grow and market local fresh produce and improve diet and healthy eating awareness;
- improve the local food produce supply chain network on Bute;
- provide healthy volunteering, learning and employment opportunities which raise awareness of the natural environment and local food production;
- establish a green box scheme;
- establish a 'pick your own' fruit and vegetable garden;
- encourage other community growing projects throughout the island and across the country;
- reduce the island's carbon footprint;
- generate local economic benefits/employment/training;
- offer a local supply for public sector procurement; and
- increase the availability of quality fresh produce on the island and thereby raise the profile of Bute as a 'green island'.

The project aims to incorporate:

- employment and training opportunities available to young people and the long term unemployed to support them to gain the experience and skills required to move into employment.
- outdoor classroom facilities for local schools and groups, with the community garden base being adjacent to the new joint campus in Rothesay.
- volunteering opportunities for all age groups via working with a range of community based organisations to ensure access for all and to encourage those most in need of support to engage. The project also aims to assist volunteers in developing new skills and offers work experience and training.

Why was the project set up? What are the projects future plans?

The project was set up to address a need identified for availability of fresh, affordable local produce and to provide an opportunity for skills development and employment in land based skills.

In May 2008 a feasibility study was carried out with 140 local households and 16 local catering outlets in order to establish demand for local produce. The project also sought to raise awareness of local food production by working with each of the island primary schools (over 450 children participated) and with local community groups and existing local producers. Further, a review of existing community gardens and local produce projects was carried out.

“We’ve worked hard to get off the ground and to help other projects to do the same.”

Bute Produce was officially launched in September 2009. The project’s market garden was established and became income generating in 2010. Four local farmers have offered the provision of land to the project to grow produce or plant fruit orchards. The project aims to

increase its food production by 150% over the next two years and to subsequently provide local produce to local schools and, where possible, to supermarkets. Increased food production locally will provide more employment opportunities to the island residents. The project is aiming for financial independence by late 2013.

Bute Produce is a component of Fyne Futures Limited, a Social Enterprise that



incorporates recycling, carbon reduction and regeneration activities. Fyne Futures has diversified and grown over the past seven years and recognises scope for ongoing growth within Bute Produce, moving beyond agriculture and tapping into marine resources (e.g. seaweed for biofuel). The Isle of Bute does not currently produce any alcohol, as many of the other islands do, and the project has plans to create an orchard and to produce freshly pressed juices from apples or cider locally.

Who are the participants and the partners?

Located on the Isle of Bute, a small island off the West Coast of Scotland, Bute Produce is designed to meet the needs of the whole island. The Isle of Bute is 47 square miles and has a population of around 7,500 people.



Bute Produce is based on a six acre site donated to the project by the Mount Stuart Trust, which is adjacent to the new Rothesay joint school campus.

The project has been developed building on research undertaken by the Argyll and Bute Agricultural Forum and working closely with Fyne Homes Housing Association, with development support from Inspiralba. The wider community have been involved via ongoing consultation.

There is a development group involving a range of stakeholder representatives, including the local farming community, Bute Healthy Living Partnership, Community Regeneration, local producers and the farmers market.

Bute Produce employs two staff, a part time administrator, three trainees and offers one regular volunteer placement. Since 2009, the project has worked with 15 core trainees each for a six month period. The majority are young males with little or no work experience who were referred to the project via employability schemes.

The main project partners are a local farm which has responsibility for the distribution of the green boxes, the three local primary schools and Towards Zero Carbon Bute. The project also works in partnership with Fyne Homes Ltd, Bute Waste Watchers, Achievement Bute, Step Up, Argyll and Bute Agricultural Forum, Farmers, NFUS, Small Scale Producers, Argyll and Bute Council, and the Mount Stuart Trust/Bute Estate. The project is developing and growing effective partnership approaches and on-going engagement with the wider community, user groups and individuals to continue to shape the project.

Bute Produce has had funding support from: Argyll and the Islands European Leader Programme, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Government Wider Role Programme, Argyll and Bute Council, Mount Stuart Trust and Community Energy Scotland.

What does the project do?

Bute Produce is committed to growing local produce which works to make the Isle of Bute more sustainable and less reliant on the mainland by growing and consuming their own seasonal fruit and vegetables. Bute Produce adopts a 'plough to plate' approach. The project also utilises what the island has – plenty of land for growing produce and people who have the potential to contribute positively to the local community and economy but are currently unemployed.

The project grows fruit and vegetables, raises awareness and understanding of local produce and provides training, volunteering, employment and educational opportunities for the wider community. In addition, the project reduces food miles and the island's carbon footprint by providing good access to locally grown fresh, affordable food. The project also has the island's first wind turbine which generates enough energy for the market garden plus surplus energy that can be directed back to the grid.

"We take a customer facing, bottom up approach."

Produce is available to on-site customers at the 'Veg Shack' which stocks a range of local, fresh, organically grown produce. The Green Box scheme delivers fresh fruit and vegetables to local residents, and includes a bespoke option allowing customers the freedom to select items they would like delivered each week. A 'Food Hub' is in development, which will be a both a virtual and physical space to allow

local farmers to upload and display what they have available in terms of all types of produce, including meat, dairy produce, and preserves and chutneys and for local people to order it online. The order can then be collected from the physical hub.

The project works specifically with the local primary schools to educate young people. The Ferry Berry Club is aimed at children between three and nine years old. Members receive a membership pack, quarterly newsletter and dedicated workshops to learn about food miles and the benefits of growing locally. Aided by the four Ferry Berry characters – Serena Strawberry, Bertie Blackberry, Godfrey Gooseberry, and Rudolf Raspberry – the children interact to explore different fruit facts and tasks related to their individual characteristics.

The project provides short term (up to six months) trainee placements and employed training opportunities as well as on-going volunteering opportunities. Many trainees continue to volunteer when their



placement ends. The project tailors its activities to suit each volunteer based on their backgrounds, interests and what they enjoy. Working on the land has been reported to be therapeutic and beneficial for those with poor mental health and disabilities. The trainees and volunteers work in teams planting seeds, picking produce, and putting together boxes for the bespoke delivery scheme. This approach embeds a social element into the work of the project, is health promoting, and nurtures self development.

Furthermore, to promote routes into employment, the project helps trainees and volunteers to develop new skills and to build up confidence and provides team working opportunities and structure. Trainees are largely young males with little or no work experience and may have a history of involvement with the criminal justice system and/or substance misuse. The project provides a platform for them to overcome the challenges in their lives and develop skills and ongoing opportunities. Trainees and volunteers take ownership of their work at Bute Produce – they see their hard work grow, can taste it and gain a sense of achievement and belief in their abilities. The Veg Shack is staffed by trainees which supports their development of customer service and retail skills. The project also teaches cooking skills using local food, including what the trainees and volunteers have grown; this enables healthier eating habits.

The project is income generating through on-site produce sales from the Veg Shack, green boxes, membership of the Ferry Berry Club, vegetable soup packs, Christmas tree hire, usage of the wind turbine, and from consultancy fees.

“You can see the positive results of working with them [trainees]. After a while they’re confident and sociable and most of them go on to employment.”

In what way is the approach ‘asset based’?

Bute Produce supports development of new skills and assets, offering the opportunity to spend time outdoors and to meet new people, as well as to gain a sense of achievement. The project provides volunteering and trainee placements and seeks to help the individual discover their talents through offering a wide range of activities and ways to get involved. The project also utilises the physical asset of the land to generate a range of, social, environmental and economic benefits for the island. Whilst the land is not owned by the community the licence to use the land allows it to be utilised as a community asset.

The project has generated the support of the community to ensure sustainability and has developed future plans which will have a positive impact on the environment, health, education, social, and employment. People learn both practical and technical skills alongside softer skills. The physical activity involved through volunteering coupled with the social interaction of working and learning with others also benefits health and wellbeing.



Bute Produce provides opportunities for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, against a backdrop of growing organic fruit and vegetables. The project supports people to identify and focus on the assets and strengths within themselves and their local communities, and helps them to use these assets to make sustainable improvements in their lives. Furthermore, the project works to empower individuals by supporting them to build self esteem, self confidence and life skills. It also utilises people's existing skills, abilities and interests to place them in suitable positions and supports them to develop their potential, investing in participants as active citizens and encouraging them to contribute to their local community and the local economy.

How has success been measured?

Volunteer and trainee involvement with the project is monitored and recorded. All volunteers and trainees complete a personal development and training plan which includes an outline of expectations and aspirations on starting the project. This is used to measure progress in relation to training and learning outcomes, personal development and future goal setting.

Quarterly meetings are held with time allocated to discuss feedback from project staff, customers and support agencies, to establish development routes and address any issues arising. Organisations which refer into the project also evaluate the progress of trainees whilst they are attached to Bute Produce. In addition informal ongoing monitoring and support is provided on a day-to-day basis by the Gardener Trainer.

Friends of Bute Produce have established a support group to encourage the project and make suggestions for future development and expansion.

What are the strengths and challenges?

A key strength of the project is the development of the trainees, in terms of both physical and softer skills, as well as the energy and commitment they bring to a local project. Two of the 17 trainees who have been part of the project are now full time employees of the project, with 13 of the 17 trainees having moved into employment or training opportunities.

Three years ago 99% of fresh fruit and vegetables consumed on the island came from the mainland. Today 87-90% comes from the mainland. Within the next three years

this figure is predicted to fall to 50-60%. The project has therefore helped to reduce food miles and has also educated local people about the importance of locally grown produce and increased the number of people who are now growing their own fruit and vegetables at home. Initially the project was business focused but over time has become customer focused and outward looking.

The success of the project has exceeded the expectations of local people (especially local farmers) and supported other community groups to develop (e.g. Ardentenny, and Campbeltown Community Organic Garden). Each of the local primary schools now have a garden area which is supported by the project, including North Bute Primary School which uses a part of a garden donated by a family who live beside the school.

The project highlighted the shortage of available growing space as an ongoing challenge. The impact of the Scottish weather on growing produce and gardening was also identified as a barrier, with volunteering for the project being heavily dependent on the weather. It is felt that better marketing will help to get the project message across and assist with engaging with a wider audience.

Although the project is not yet fully sustainable, it is envisaged this will happen in the very near future. Bute Produce currently depends on external funding but the grant funding required is reducing each year as the project develops income generating streams.

On a personal level, staff expressed high levels of satisfaction in helping local people and seeing trainees make a positive impact on their lives with the support of the project. Staff also reflected that working with local people highlighted the social problems on the island and the hands on experience they have had of working within a tight knit island community and understanding the challenges this brings. Staff also felt they themselves had learned new technical and agricultural skills.

“We are making small differences to many people’s lives. If this replicates throughout Scotland and beyond think of the possibilities....”

Playbusters' Connecting Generations Project





Playbusters' Connecting Generations Project

aims to promote interaction between younger and older people within the East End of Glasgow. The project provides opportunities for both younger and older people to spend time together, learn different skills and work together to improve their community. Activities are aimed at improving confidence and self esteem and overall community connections.

What are the aims and objectives?

The aim of the Connecting Generations project is to create positive relationships, raise awareness and reduce isolation by bringing older people and younger people together to participate in a variety of workshops and activities in order to exchange skills, explore and address negative perceptions, create greater understanding and promote safer, more cohesive communities.

Specifically Connecting Generations wishes to:

- Establish positive relationships between the generations through positive dialogue, trust, understanding, awareness of issues and formation of friendships.
- Support older people and young people to become both teachers and learners as they share skills and experience activities and informal learning opportunities together.
- Reduce social isolation through involvement in a variety of activities, volunteering opportunities and the use of technology.
- Make strong connections between younger and older people, enhance a sense of safety and wellbeing and impact positively on 'fear of crime'.

Playbusters strives to promote a sense of community and to provide evidence that participating in the project benefits both individuals and the wider community, thus improving the community's social capital.

Why was the project set up? Has the approach changed over time?

Established in 2002, Playbusters is based in and works with eleven of Glasgow's east end communities. The organisation was originally set up to address the lack of safe, good quality play areas for children and young people in the east end of Glasgow. Playbusters aims to support parents/carers to work in partnership with various agencies to influence and increase play provision and services for children and young people. It also supports local people to take

"We are community focused and never want to lose that grassroots approach."

responsibility for their children's education and personal development. In response to local need and the desire of parents to improve the area for the benefit of the whole community, Playbusters has developed significantly since its establishment and continues to evolve.

The Connecting Generations project was set up following project working and wider engagement with young people. Many young people expressed a lack of close contact with extended family and were not being afforded the opportunity to learn from and build positive relationships with older citizens. Similar discussions with older people demonstrated that many did not have contact with young people, despite having spare time available and skills to offer. Both groups felt that they could share skills: older people offered 'traditional skills' whilst younger people could pass on their skills in the use of technology.

"We really listen and take the lead from local people."

A successful pilot ran in 2006. Two local schools (77 young people) and 29 older people took part, supported by the Standing Up to Antisocial Behaviour Award and Scottish Government Wider Role Fund. The Connecting Generations project was subsequently launched in August 2009. The project continues to expand the range of activities available in response to the participants' areas of interest and availability of skills.

Who are the participants and the partners?

Based in Glasgow's East End, Connecting Generations engages with people aged over 50 and those aged between eight and 16 years within the community. The project aims to benefit 900 people over a five year period (2009 to 2014), 300 of whom will be volunteers aged 50 years and over, the remaining 600 to be young people.

The project works in partnership with local schools and is funded by the BIG Lottery. A wide range of stakeholders and partners also contribute, including the Police, PAGE (Pensioners Action Group East), John Wheatley College, Cranhill Community Project and the local housing associations. Playbusters has a team of 25 staff (including sessional workers), and a diverse and active volunteer group of over 100 people. The organisation is managed by a voluntary Board of Directors consisting of parents and grandparents from the wider East End.

What does the project do?

The Connecting Generations project works to bring older people and young people together through a range of workshops and activities, visits to places of interest and the transference of both traditional and technological skills. All participants become both a *“teacher and a learner”*. The programme was devised to help bridge the gap between people of all ages throughout the East End of Glasgow.

“We have a strong network of partners because we do what we say we do.”

The project is focused on creating strong connections and networks throughout the East End, improving understanding across generations, increasing levels of trust between the beneficiaries and reducing reported levels of antisocial behaviour. The programme not only opens up and builds new skills but provides a valuable opportunity to impact on the social isolation felt by many older people. Older and younger people are the target groups as the project recognises that these are the people who spend the most time within their communities.

Intergenerational activities hosted by the project include gardening and allotment working, heritage workshops, art regeneration programmes, club activities, traditional crafts, games and sports, and IT and technology workshops. All activities are about providing joint learning and shared experiences. As at September 2010, 310 young people and 91 older adults had engaged and participated in workshops and activities. A number of organised visits to places of intergenerational interest have been organised by the programme including trips to museums, gardens and the theatre. From 2009 to 2010, 90 older people and 114 young people have taken part in the organised visits/trips.

Playbusters has received a number of high profile awards and commendations including the Queens Award for Voluntary Service 2011 (the equivalent of an MBE for voluntary groups), the Volunteer Friendly Award, and a number of awards for the work of individual volunteers.

“Our strength is being where people are and where they’re happy to be.”

In what way is the approach ‘asset based’?

The Connecting Generations project works to enhance the existing skills of older and younger people and to build new skills through joint learning and shared experiences. Furthermore, through the work of the programme new relationships and friendships have been built, a greater understanding of each generation realised, and confidence and self esteem increased. This has resulted in creating stronger communities and greater cohesion between generations. Improved family relationships are also reported.

Working in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders and across the communities of the East End of Glasgow, the project provides a flexible response to the wishes

“A community is more than just the people who live there; it’s also about the people who invest time and energy.”

and interests of each participant and strives to find activities that suit each person in a supportive and inclusive way. By providing opportunities for shared experiences and learning, the programme has helped build positive relationships between younger and older people. Connecting Generations supports positive dialogue and the formation of friendships, both within and across

generations, and nurtures the development of trust, understanding and awareness of the issues facing each generation.

By adopting and embedding a volunteering ethos, Playbusters and the Connecting Generations project utilise the skills and talents of local people to create change, build social capital and inspire community action where people can make a difference in their community.

How has success been measured?

To ensure the project meets its goals and provides flexibility in its delivery, Playbusters has a comprehensive system in place for recording information related to all their participants and volunteers, and to measure and track wider project milestones and outcomes.

On engagement with the Connecting Generations project, each participant is surveyed to establish their areas of interest, skills and what they would like to gain from their involvement with the project. They are then followed up six months later and at



the end of each year. This information is used to develop and plan future project activity. Video and audio equipment are used to encourage people to speak of their experiences and to help measure the softer outcomes such as increased confidence, wellbeing and changes in perceptions.

What are the strengths and challenges?

Playbusters' Connecting Generations project provides opportunities for both generations to learn from each other, enjoy each others company and work together to improve the general environment of the community. Through a range of activities led by participants, confidence and self esteem is increased and overall community connections and cohesion improved.

The negative perceptions and labelling of East End communities historically and by the media was also raised as ongoing barrier for the success of community led projects.

Funding was highlighted as a challenge for Playbusters as a whole. Staff expressed frustration arising from the need to deliver the project on a *"shoestring budget"*. Conflict between the short term nature of their funding and the long term plans they would like to put in place was a further difficulty. As Playbusters takes a whole community approach, accessing funding was raised as an issue as a number of funders have specific target audience criteria attached to their funds.

At a personal level, staff expressed high levels of job satisfaction and pride in being part of the local community. Staff also reflected on the energy of local people and their willingness to get involved and try something new. They felt that the local community and people have changed a great deal over the years.

"It's about communities working together to counteract negative media images."

Participants articulated their pleasure in being involved with the project and appreciation of the range of activities on offer and opportunities to volunteer. Participants also spoke of the important role of the project in providing opportunities to get outdoors and engage with the local community. They also valued being able to develop new skills and to socialise with other participants and form new friendships locally.

Fair Isle Primary School's Opportunities for All





Fair Isle Primary School's Opportunities for All

project is a school-based initiative which delivers a range of complementary activities to ensure that families have the opportunity to play, learn and work together. Going beyond statutory educational obligations, and employing staff to work directly with families, the project focuses on encouraging positive family interactions and raising the aspirations of young people and adults.

What are the aims and objectives?

The project aims to raise the self esteem of both parents and children and provide them with the skills to make positive changes in life.

The Opportunities for All project is working towards achieving a number of outcomes – the things that the project is helping to make happen in the school and community environments:

- Parents and carers, including lone parents, step families, fathers and grandparents, will have improved parental skills to meet the challenge of parenting in the 21st century.
- Parents and children will demonstrate an improvement in their aspirational aims through greater self esteem, life skills and development of a 'can do' attitude.
- Families will report improvements in family life through a greater interaction between the generations.
- Children and parents will be re-engaged within the family and wider community, developing awareness of different life options and choices thus taking responsibility for their own actions.

The project adopts a holistic approach in linking education, family life and community through activities based in the school for both children and parents.

“The project takes an indirect approach to improving health and family issues.”

Why was the project set up? Has the approach changed over time?

The need for the project was identified by the school head teacher following an increase in the number of families

requiring support through times of crisis. It was recognised that social services intervene in crisis situations by which time irreparable damage may have been done to the family structure. Local charities providing family support were also overwhelmed by the demand for their services. Teachers tried to assist families where possible, but were hampered due to a lack of time, scope of responsibility and restrictive legislation. Unmet demand for practical and emotional support for families in difficulty in the local area was evident.

In response to a large number of children displaying challenging behaviours, and following an audit of desired parental support, new facilities and resources available in the school allowed the school to do ***“something for the community”***. The school was

able to put in place a range of activities to allow families to play and learn together.



A successful pilot project was run in January 2007 based on the ‘Philosophy for Children’ programme, where the initial focus of the project was topic based work such as healthy eating activities, arts and crafts and physical activity. The project was subsequently funded by the BIG

Lottery in June 2007, a dedicated Family Worker employed and the project officially launched in December 2007.

The project has developed significantly since its establishment and continues to evolve in response to the expressed wishes and interests of participants and the comments and feedback received in project evaluations.

Who are the participants and the partners?

Fair Isle Primary School is situated in the Templehall area of Kirkcaldy, one of Scotland's most deprived areas which has high rates of unemployment, single parent households and substance abuse. Working for the pupils who attend Fair Isle Primary School and their families, the project aims to reach over 395 beneficiaries over a five year period (2009 to 2014).

The project is managed by a committee comprising the head teacher of the school, the principal teacher, the depute head teacher and community representatives. The management group is supported by a number of sub-groups which include the children, parents and wider family members.

"The school is at the heart of the community."

What does the project do?

The project aims to provide parents and children with a new set of expectations, aspirations and values. Set within the school environment, the project adopts a proactive parenting approach, aimed at supporting parents to acknowledge the impact their behaviour has on their children and providing the tools and resources to parents to make better informed choices. All interventions and activities are additional to the statutory obligations undertaken by the departments of Education and Social Work.

The activities provided are fun for parents and children to participate in together. The range of joint activities include dance and Zumba classes, dad 'n' lads football, cookery classes, drama and music workshops, arts and crafts classes and science club. These events enable families to spend time together and to give people of all ages different perspectives. There is a minimal monetary fee for attendance and a group of volunteers help run and deliver these activities. Currently, 84% of the school community are engaged with the project.

"We've built the project on the knowledge and interests of local people."

A range of activities are also available for parents and extended family members during the school day. These include positive parenting classes, stress and anxiety classes, relaxation and complimentary therapies, arts and crafts, keep fit and adult education classes. These classes strive to build supportive and effective relationships with parents and between the parents themselves through peer support and mutual learning. They are also aimed at improving mental health, supporting the building of new skills which may improve routes into employment, reducing isolation and improving physical health.

The work of the project is underpinned by the employment of an experienced family worker and an educational consultant (an experienced social worker) to provide on-going support to children and their families. Both the family worker and the

educational consultant provide support to children and families through tailored one-to-one, parent and child(ren) and whole family unit sessions, in both the school setting and at home. This approach provides a clear link between home and school life. In addition, the family worker offers a number drop-in surgeries each week for

“We start with the good things they do already rather than focusing on the problems. It’s about acknowledging the positive aspects of the family.”

immediate support and advice. The support provided places a focus on early intervention and is dependent on the specific issues affecting each family which may include addictions, housing issues, unemployment, debt, relationship issues and parenting skills. Thirty five per cent of parents of children attending the school, have accessed direct family support this year

(2010-2011). The family worker and the educational consultant link in and refer to other agencies as appropriate and work to provide a holistic network of support for parents and children.

In what way is the approach ‘asset based’?

The project works to improve parenting skills and family interactions, and to generate opportunities for families to spend time together raising the confidence, aspirations and self belief of both parents and children.

Through the work of the project and relationships and links established by the family worker parents and children are supported to make changes for the better by enhancing their skills for resilience, relationships, and self esteem, and to build supportive networks and friendships which help them make sense of their environments and take control of their lives.

The family worker supports families to identify the strengths and resources within themselves and to recognise the positive aspects of their families rather than simply focusing on the problems they face. Many adults have moved into volunteering opportunities within the wider school community and with local workplaces and voluntary agencies after engagement with and support from the project.

“...taking steps to make life better from themselves and their children.”

Parenting skills and family relationships are improved through experience, participation and exposure to a diverse range of activities and interventions, all of which are led by the areas of interest and wishes of participants. The approach is responsive and adaptable to the feedback of the children and parents. Parents have become more aware and recognise the importance of health and wellbeing for themselves and their children and the impact this has on performance at school and educational attainment. Many families are now learning how to have fun together and the project

reports improved family relationships and connections alongside reduced personal and community isolation.

“Spend and support now to save later.”

How has success been measured?

Internal monitoring and evaluation of the project is carried out using questionnaires and focus group sessions with children, parents and wider family members to ensure that the project regularly reviews and monitors its work and responds with ongoing adjustments as required.

Positive feedback has also been received from a wide range of educational partners and regulatory bodies including the HMIE Good Practice visit feedback, Fife Council review and the HMIE Inspection 2010. The HMIE Good Practice visit, which focused on the school’s activities in relation to health and wellbeing, reported that Fair Isle Primary School’s practice was considered to be ‘excellent’ and, in some areas sectors, ‘leading’. The Fife Council Review on Learning and Teaching praised the school for strong partnership working and involving parents and carers in school life. The HMIE inspection visit carried out in 2010 acknowledged the link between the work of the project and positive impacts on health and wellbeing.

“Anxiety over not being refunded and having to withdraw the project and its support from community.”

The project is currently undergoing an external evaluation of its activities, engagement, outputs and impacts of the project on children, parents and the wider community.

What are the strengths and challenges?

The project places the school at the heart of the community. It provides a non-threatening environment for families to spend time together while participating in a diverse range of fun activities, over and above those required



by educational obligations. It further encourages positive family interactions, positive parenting and the development of new skills, interests and opportunities for both children and adults.

The project is able to support parents by providing early intervention and short term support, before making the links with appropriate agencies for families and individuals who require longer term support. The school and the project have been able to reach a number of families whom *“it could have been worse for”* had they not benefited from the support of the family worker and wider school community.

“It’s rewarding to see the journey taken by families, parents blossoming and enjoying their role.”

The responsive nature of the project, effective partnership working and information sharing across sectors has allowed the project to be a local success and gain recognition of its innovative and creative ways of working in an educational setting. The local school, community, statutory agencies, and families have been able to work together to address a local

need. The family worker has become a trusted member of the school community and ensures that families have rapid access to support where needed. Furthermore, the family worker has built up effective links and relationships with children and families across the school which has become pivotal in maintaining the child and family centred ethos of the project.

On the other hand, funding was identified as an ongoing challenge for the project. The nature of short term funding placed a high degree of uncertainty on the project in being able to plan ahead and created anxiety within the staff team around the likely impact of withdrawing the service on local families. The project is now well recognised within the local area and more security in funding terms would enable the project to support a greater number of families and provide stability for the children and families who already participate.

The transient nature of the local population was also highlighted as a challenge for the project which presents difficulties in terms of providing continuity of support for individuals and families. A number of hard to reach families, despite attempts, remain unable or unwilling to engage with the project.

From a personal perspective, staff expressed high levels of job fulfilment and pride and stated that it was a privilege to be involved in people’s lives and to be able to support them through difficult times. Staff expressed pride in seeing parents and families learning together and in being part of the ‘journey’ that families had taken to improve their circumstances and home life. It was also highlighted that staff must be open and honest with families and help them to realise the reality and impact of their situation. Staff also spoke of the enhanced educational role taken by the project and the benefits of taking a more holistic approach.

The Big ShoutER



The Big ShoutER



The Big ShoutER

is a youth involvement, community research and peer education project linked to the East Renfrewshire Youth Health Service. The project focuses on influencing positive change in the design and delivery of youth services in East Renfrewshire.

What are the aims and objectives?

The Big ShoutER project aims to actively involve young people in decisions affecting them to help them to become effective contributors, successful learners, confident individuals, and responsible citizens, all of which contributes to and impacts upon a young person's physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing.

The project aims to ensure that young people involved in the peer education and community research project are able to:

- Identify their own health needs.
- Develop the skills and confidence to work as part of a team.
- Develop skills in a range of media and information technology.
- Improve their skills to research and identify the health needs of local young people.
- Improve their knowledge of health issues affecting young people and the community.
- Improve their skills and confidence to engage with and present their findings to local service providers.
- Improve their skills and confidence to deliver health messages to local young people.
- Develop skills in identifying personal growth.

Furthermore, the project aims to show that young people can make a positive contribution to their communities and demonstrate the benefits of staff and young people working together on related topics.

Why was the project set up? Has the approach changed over time?

The project was set up following young service users from 'The Place' at the East Renfrewshire Youth Health Service expressing an interest in having more of a say in the delivery of the youth health service. Following discussions it was evident that young people wanted to be more involved in decisions which were taken about them. However, there were no mechanisms in place which allowed young people to direct the services that were being targeted at them, such as smoking cessation services. The young people stated that they would like *"more than just lip service"* – they wanted to be fully engaged and listened to rather than continually being consulted with no real change as a result.

Following meetings with local young people and CHCP staff, a plan was developed to start a peer education, user involvement and community research project. East Renfrewshire staff became aware that other young people from East Dunbartonshire were discussing similar issues and joint training on health issues and youth engagement was suggested.



A number of meetings and a successful residential event, named 'The Big Shout', attended by young people from East Renfrewshire (ER) and East Dunbartonshire (ED), led to a plan for youth health services and how young people should be consulted and engaged. The establishment of the Big ShoutERs (East Renfrewshire) and the Big ShoutED (East Dunbartonshire) followed.

Who are the participants and the partners?

The Big ShoutERs project is open to any young person aged over 12 and who lives in East Renfrewshire. Young people come to the project from a variety of routes including from other community projects and via recommendations from other young people and youth workers. The project currently engages with five young people aged between 16 and 17 years, most of whom are from deprived areas of East Renfrewshire, and all of whom have overcome low self esteem and confidence issues since joining the project.

"It's a good group of people. We all come from different places but we all get on and work well together."

The project is led by the health improvement team, East Renfrewshire CHCP, working in close partnership with the young person's services

team of East Renfrewshire Council. The project is supported by two staff members and works in partnership with East Dunbartonshire CHCP and local service providers.

What does the project do?

The Big ShoutER (user involvement, community research and peer education project) was established by young volunteers, with a desire to influence positive change in health and community settings. The young people initially approached the Youth Health Service staff to share their ideas and vision of improving the health of the local young people by ensuring that the 'expressed' health needs of young people in East Renfrewshire are being addressed.

The Big ShoutERs designed and facilitated a youth health consultation, supported by the Walt Fund. They consulted with local young people, specifically targeting those identified as the most vulnerable and hard to engage with, including young people leaving care, young carers and young people with additional support needs. Over the last 12 months, over 280 local young people have been consulted with to identify their health needs and health issues. The consultation sessions have been facilitated

“We started off with a blank sheet of paper but the action plan is now a yellow brick road.”

in a creative way by using a bed and scraps of material to produce a patchwork quilt covered with health issues. The youth consultation event identified four key health issues for young people, namely smoking, sexual health, healthy eating and physical activity, all underpinned by mental health improvement.

The findings have been disseminated to senior managers in East Renfrewshire CHCP via Integrated Children’s Services Planning Groups, and to local school children and young people via a health festival to enable them to influence local policy makers and service providers. The Big ShoutERs have also presented their findings to local service providers to help shape future service design. The young people involved with the project are linking in to the Public Partnership Forum to ensure youth voices continue to be heard.



Based on the health issues emerging from the consultation with young people and to inform the next stage of the project, the Big ShoutERs have been involved in training on:

- Youth involvement
- Mental health
- Sexual health
- Tobacco control
- Gender based and domestic violence
- Health issues in the community.

The Big ShoutERs have carried out extensive research on a range of health topics and young people's views on them. This has led to the group speaking at a number of high profile international and national conferences including the international conference on Assets of Health and Wellbeing across the Lifecourse in London in September 2011.

At the time of writing, the Big ShoutERs are embarking on the delivery of peer education sessions with other young people on various health topics both within the school and community setting.

In what way is the approach 'asset based'?

The Big ShoutER project works to build the skills of young people through joint learning and shared experiences. Through the work of the programme, new relationships and friendships have been built, and confidence, sense of purpose, self belief and self esteem all increased. The direction of the project is led by the young people and staff work alongside to support them in a responsive and adaptable manner and to ensure the project remains manageable.

"It's about letting the young people lead the way."

The project is focused on developing and improving life skills and enhancing the strengths and personal resources of young people. Involvement in the project challenges, inspires and empowers the young people, enabling them to find the best within themselves and supporting them to make long lasting improvements in their lives, relationships and wider communities.

The community research and consultation elements of the project have allowed young people to actively engage with other young people and to identify the health issues affecting young people in East Renfrewshire. This has built and developed both practical research skills and knowledge and softer communication skills. The peer

support element of the project allows the young people to share their knowledge about health issues in a mutually supportive way within their own peer group.

Furthermore, the approach taken by the project allows young people to be fully engaged, to be able to actively influence and have a clear voice in the design and development of health related services, ensuring that the vision and ideas of local young people are recognised, taken on board and addressed.

How has success been measured?

A system of ongoing monitoring of youth engagement is in place using a wide variety of tools. These include participant evaluation forms following youth led events in local communities, staff observation sheets and Big ShoutER participant pre and post assessment tool. The minutes of meetings with service providers are also recorded to express how the young people's views are being fed into service delivery and development.

A range of other materials are also collated to demonstrate the young people's involvement with the project including photographs, exhibition materials, participant blogs and Twitter entries as well as copies of media coverage.

What are the strengths and challenges?

The Big ShoutER focuses on the empowerment of young people by building confidence, self esteem and life skills around health related topics to positively influence health change in community settings. The young people have been actively engaged in the design of the project and consultation with local people about the health issues that matter to them. The creative and interactive nature of the project helps the young people to take a youthful and entertaining approach to presenting important information.



The forward thinking nature of the project and effective partnership working between different CHCP and council teams have allowed the project to be a success. The young people, local service providers and statutory agencies have been able to work together to integrate the findings from the community research

and consultation into the development of local children's services planning and health services delivery. The highly regarded staff members managing the group and facilitating the activities, opening doors to service providers and providing support are pivotal in keeping the group working together effectively towards a common goal.

Working on a small budget was raised as a challenge for the project, and staff have had to work creatively to evidence the impact of the project, particularly for the wider community of young people in East Renfrewshire. However working with young people can be demanding,

and a current strength of the project is engagement with a small highly motivated group. At times, slow progress has made it difficult to sustain interest and motivation from the young people, as they plan for the peer education element of the project.

"It's exciting to be involved in a dynamic young group."

At a personal level, staff expressed pride in being part of the project. Staff also reflected on the willingness and energy of the young people to get involved and to try something new. The staff feel that they have also learnt a lot from the young people.

The young people involved with the project spoke of the self belief, independence and confidence they had gained – they are now able to speak with confidence to a range of audiences which they would have found very difficult before joining the Big ShoutERs. Participants also highlighted the new skills they had developed, their improved family relationships, new friendships they have formed and their ability to portray a more positive image of young people.

Castlemilk Timebank



Castlemilk
Timebank



Castlemilk Timebank

provides support for people to come together within their community and a means for local interest groups to share skills and talents in a mutually beneficial way.

What are the aims and objectives?

Castlemilk Timebank aims to promote community involvement and to rebuild a sense of community spirit in the Castlemilk area of Glasgow. The Timebank supports people to exchange skills, services and support. One hour of a participants' time will give this participant one hour of someone else's. Essentially, the project turns spare time into shared time.

"Being part of something empowers people."

Timebanking is a recognised mechanism for building community spirit through the exchange of services, skills and support between neighbours and within the community and is run by members of the community themselves. This approach encourages volunteering, enables people to create their own self help networks, reduces isolation and encourages a cohesive community.

Why was the project set up? Has the approach changed over time?

Castlemilk Timebank was established by the Castlemilk Economic Development Agency (CEDA) after learning about the work and approach taken by other timebanks. A feasibility study in 2001 confirmed that the residents of Castlemilk were supportive of a timebank in the area. A steering group, made up of people who live and work in the local area, was set up to oversee and be accountable for the project and a project co-ordinator was appointed. Following a pilot study and together with CEDA, the steering group successfully applied and secured funding. The Timebank has been funded by the BIG Lottery since 2002 and currently has funding until October 2013. Since its establishment Castlemilk Timebank has built strong links with a range of organisations in the wider community and the Timebank continues to evolve and grow in Castlemilk.

Through the work of the Timebank and interests of local people, a number of additional groups have been established. Although not directly part of the Timebank,

these groups bring people together and facilitate the development of new skills and interests such as floristry, crafting and jewellery making. Members of the groups take a peer mentoring approach, with more experienced members of the group supporting and working alongside newer members.

Who are the participants and the partners?

Taking a whole community approach, the Timebank works with and for the people of Castlemilk, a large housing estate on the outskirts of Glasgow. Castlemilk is associated with social and economic exclusion. As both a cause and a symptom of exclusion, many residents suffer from social isolation resulting from a lack of close ties or support within the community. This isolation can have very negative effects on the confidence and self esteem of individuals, in particular on young people from vulnerable groups.

“It is a project run by the community for the community.”

As at October 2011, the total membership of the Timebank was 282. Volunteers include people with mental ill health, those who are retired, lone parents and those who have been affected by domestic abuse. The Timebank has on average approximately 30 people actively exchanging skills

on regular basis, with a small group of others participating as time and skills allow. The Timebank also links with over 60 organisations and local businesses.

People become involved with the Timebank predominately through word of mouth from other volunteers and through self referral. The Timebank also receives referrals from a number of sources including local care homes and local mental health projects.

The Timebank’s management committee is made up entirely of Castlemilk residents. The project works in partnership with a number of agencies in the area including the Domestic Violence Unit, Working Links and the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH). The Timebank employs three staff – a full time co-ordinator and two part time admin assistants.

The project also exchanges skills and support



with other local businesses in Castlemilk, including administration and office support, photocopying and supporting local community events. In one case, a business exchange led to the full time employment of a Timebank volunteer.

Castlemilk Timebank is the only timebank operating in the south east of Glasgow. It has an established reputation for delivering accessible and responsive services to a wide range of individuals and groups in the area via community participation and involvement.

What does the project do?

Castlemilk Timebank aims to increase the involvement of people of all ages within their communities. The Timebank provides support for people to come together within their community and a means for local interest groups to share skills and talents in a mutually beneficial way.

The Timebank use people's time as a currency, where everyone's time is of equal value irrespective of the skills that they offer. Credits (in time) are earned by volunteering. The time one person spends helping another is added up and the time credit can then be exchanged when a service is required from someone else. Through the work of the Timebank, individuals gain skills, and this in turn increases the projects skills base and range of skills within the community.

"Local people working with and for local people."

The skills that current members offer are varied. Exchanges include ironing, gardening, dog walking, shopping, Reiki, attending local meetings, picking up prescriptions, transport, hanging curtains, cleaning and befriending. As of October 2011 the total number of hours exchanged was 2,665.

Alongside the day-to-day work of the Timebank, a collaboration with the Scottish Prison Service was established four years ago. Within the prison project, prisoners volunteer their time to assist other prisoners. The initiative helps to recognise and reward the volunteering that prisoners undertake to contribute to the prison's community life. However, instead of the prisoners spending the credits they have earned on accessing services for themselves, they donate them to a participating timebank for their own family and others in the community to benefit from. Eight prisons across Scotland are currently involved with the Timebank project.

The Timebank also works with the local community and hosts a number of community events throughout the year. These include two family events, a Christmas Festival and a free Family Fun Day in June. The Timebank's volunteers fundraise throughout the year to provide these community events.

Castlemilk Timebank is unique as no other organisation in the area provides non-structured volunteering opportunities in the form of 'soft' skills exchanges. Due to

the efforts of the volunteers and the committee, Castlemilk Timebank was awarded the Evening Times Community Spirit Award in 2007. The project has also received the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service 2008 (the equivalent of an MBE for voluntary groups), and a number of awards for the work of individual volunteers.

Through the work with the Scottish Prison Service, the project has been awarded the Butler Award.

"It re-connects people with the community."

In what way is the approach 'asset based'?

Castlemilk Timebank provides support for people to play a fuller, more active part in their community. The approach taken by the Timebank is based on the belief that everyone has something to offer and a contribution to make and sees people as the answer. As individuals offer their services and skills, they may feel more useful and valuable and more included in community life. People volunteer their soft skills meaning that there are no skills barriers to people participating in the project. Therefore, the work of the Timebank directly promotes and encourages social inclusion and community connections.

Castlemilk Timebank is successful in attracting people who may not usually get involved in traditional volunteering. The Timebank offers a flexible, two-way (both giving and receiving) alternative which fits in with people's lives. Many participants feel they are improving their neighbourhoods for the common good by building reciprocity and trust and by bringing down the barriers between people, including those with health issues. The Timebank enables people to create their own self help networks, reduces isolation and encourages a cohesive community.

The project utilises the existing skills and abilities of volunteers to place them in suitable voluntary positions and supports them to develop their potential. Furthermore, it helps people to identify and focus on the assets and strengths within themselves and their communities by enhancing their skills for resilience, relationships, knowledge, confidence and self esteem.

How has success been measured?

A specialist computer system called 'Timekeeper' records all skills exchanged and an evaluation sheet is issued to each volunteer on completion of the exchange. Reports are generated on a monthly basis to keep track of skills exchanges, volunteer involvement, numbers of new members, training provided and finance details.

The progress of each individual volunteer is evaluated on a one-to-one basis via an informal interview on an annual basis. Progress is monitored and measured based on each individual volunteer's circumstances including the number of social interactions in a set period and the number of skills exchanges participated in.

Following their involvement in project training courses, volunteers complete an evaluation form to allow them to comment on various aspects of the course e.g. the

information provided, the trainer, and the training facility. The project also holds a number of internal informal events each year with volunteers. These events are aimed at bringing the volunteers together to exchange experiences of volunteering with the Community Timebank. This event is also an opportunity to undertake a face-to-face evaluation with volunteers of the wide work of the Timebank. A survey questionnaire is sent to those who cannot attend the event.

What are the strengths and challenges?

Castlemilk Timebank harnesses the skills and time of the people in the area for the benefit of the wider community. The Timebank offers a unique and practical way to help people develop the mutual networks of support that underpin healthy communities. It encourages the creation of relationships, activity, networks and support that builds community.

The Timebank is a community based initiative that uses time as a unit of local currency and allows people to come together and help each other. It provides a flexible approach to volunteering, with participant's contributing on their own terms and in response to their own circumstances. The less structured nature of the approach and the focus on softer skills attracts many people who would not usually volunteer.

Consultations and service review with volunteers have indicated that the inclusiveness, safety, reliability, ease of access to services and the ability to respond to a range of user demands are key strengths of the Castlemilk Timebank. The approach ensures an effective and flexible system of involving the local community in skills exchanges and 'soft' volunteering.

The Timebank relies on volunteers to deliver the project and it is recognised that many volunteers are doing more than is required. Timebank staff highlighted the need to revisit the original project focus and overarching principles and to develop a business plan for the future. Raising local awareness of the project and developing better marketing tools were also felt to be important.



Funding is an ongoing challenge. Although the Timebank has been well funded to date, there is now a need to identify and source potential new funders as the current funding period is time limited.

At a personal level, staff spoke of their job fulfilment, pride in working in and with the local community and the tremendous personal benefits gained from being involved with a worthwhile project which is helping local people. Volunteers expressed appreciation in being able to access help at home by providing time and skills to others. Other benefits to volunteers included meeting other people with similar interests, forming new friendships locally and helping raise people's confidence via their involvement in project groups.

218





218

provides an integrated, holistic and woman centred residential and day support programme for adult female offenders. The project aims to help women break the cycle of their offending behaviour.

What are the aims and objectives?

The overall aim of the 218 service is set out in the project's mission statement:

"The 218 service is committed to finding ways of working effectively with women who are marginalised by society. We aim to engage women with complex needs who are involved in the criminal justice system in accessing relevant, individualised services, by means of well trained staff teams who are skilled and confident to deliver a range of exciting and dynamic programmes. Through the experience of being part of this service we aim to empower women to make a more positive contribution to their lives, their families, communities and society."

Specifically the service wishes to:

- reduce the number of women from the Glasgow area being remanded into custody and/or receiving a custodial sentence;
- reduce the number of women being prosecuted for offences where a diversion would be an appropriate option;
- interrupt the pattern of offending behaviour displayed by the identified client group;
- identify on an individual basis the issues and needs relating to offending behaviour and create an appropriate individual care plan;
- provide immediate health assessment and intervention;
- provide service users with the opportunity to participate in positive life planning;
- encourage service users to establish a healthy lifestyle through dietary and nutritional plans;

- provide comprehensive assessments;
- ensure a high quality service that allows for women to develop skills and strategies to redefine their lifestyles away from offending behaviour and associated patterns.

218 is a key mechanism through which the city of Glasgow is delivering on national criminal justice objectives and improving the provision and outcomes for women offenders.

Why was the project set up?

Over the last 15 years there has been a steady rise in the number of women offenders and women in prison, alongside a growing awareness that the causes of female offending and the needs of women offenders are different to those of their male counterparts.

Following a high number of suicides by women offenders in the late 1990s, a review of service provision for women offenders was carried out. The need for a 'time out' centre was identified in response to growing concerns about the requirements and treatment of women offenders in the criminal justice system. It was believed that such a service would be of particular benefit in Glasgow by offering the courts a specialist facility for women who are subject to the criminal justice process and who may or may not have co-existing addiction problems. It would offer safety and certain limits, in a community setting, whilst keeping the focus on the treatment of problems.

The 218 centre was opened in Glasgow in December 2003. The Scottish Executive provided funding for the service which was originally a partnership between NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and Turning Point Scotland (TPS).

In 2006 the Glasgow Addiction Service (GAS) began providing health related interventions at 218.

Who are the participants and the partners?

To access the service, 218 participants must be:

1. women offenders who are at least 18 years old with involvement in the criminal justice system (current or within last 12 months);
2. assessed as particularly vulnerable to custody or re-offending.

Many of the women engaged with the project are also involved in substance misuse.

Located in the city centre of Glasgow, the service provides both a residential and a day support programme which can be combined or used separately as required. The

“It’s not about labelling people but we can only provide the best support when you know what’s going on in someone’s life.”

maximum period of engagement permitted is six months for the residential service and 12 months for the day service although the project has some flexibility built in. The majority of referrals to the service are made by the courts or Criminal Justice Social Work. The service works with over 600 women per year, predominately aged between 25 and 39 years.

Project participants are usually subject to statutory supervision and have complex needs including substance misuse, mental and/or physical health problems, experiences of domestic abuse, problems with housing/accommodation, trauma issues, or a pattern of repeat offending behaviour. The project is not equipped to work with women with acute mental health problems, those who require hospitalisation due to physical illness or those who require constant observation due to their behaviour.

Priority is given to the referral of women offenders within Glasgow City, although women from other areas will not be refused if their vulnerability would be likely to cause further harm should their referral be denied. From 2007 to 2009, 97% of participants were from a Glasgow postcode.¹⁰

The service is delivered through a partnership between Turning Point Scotland (TPS) and Glasgow Addiction Service (GAS), and is managed and overseen by three multi-agency, multi-disciplinary groups.

What does the project do?

The 218 service is an initiative that takes a person centred approach to dealing with the issues that women offenders face. The programme of work at 218 is designed to address issues with substance use, physical and mental health and other social needs including housing and childcare.

A nurse led medical clinic provides substitute prescribing, and a wide range of physical and mental health and therapeutic interventions are delivered by nursing and other specialist staff. As a result of this approach an extensive range of interventions and provision is available for women at the service including one-to-one key work, counselling, psychology and psychiatry, physical health advice and intervention, occupational therapy, chiropody, dentistry, dietary and nutritional advice, acupuncture, group exercises, weekend outings and outward bound courses. All that is available is offered in an individually focussed, flexible programme of support which responds to each woman’s needs. Key work is delivered in a woman centred, collaborative manner with both the project worker and the service user negotiating and discussing key elements of the care plan together.

“218 is person centred which is powerful.”

¹⁰ Easton and Matthews. Evaluation of the 218 Service: examining implementation and outcomes. Scottish Government Social Research, Edinburgh: 2010.

The residential service provides supported accommodation for up to 12 women offenders from between four weeks and six months. The initial four weeks involves a comprehensive assessment of each woman's needs culminating in the creation of a tailored care plan. Following assessment, each woman remains in the residential unit or returns to the community and continues their involvement with the 218 day service. After three months of supported accommodation a full review and assessment is carried out. If initial goals have been met, women then work towards community re-integration.

The day service works with up to 50 women offenders who remain in the community. Women attend one compulsory group and up to three further contacts a week and can also voluntarily attend the range of creative or practical groups offered at the service. The programme involves a combination of one-to-one support, group work and a wide range of other activities and interventions. Each woman who engages

with the service is fully assessed and contributes to their own individually tailored care plan. The period of engagement with the day service ranges from three to twelve months.

The programme delivered at 218 is structured around four key stages aligned with the four phases of the stages of change model and has been redesigned following consultation with staff and service users.



- *Phase 1:* motivation to start to address key issues.
- *Phase 2:* gaining a clearer understanding of key issues and how to overcome them.
- *Phase 3:* changing behaviour, stabilising.
- *Phase 4:* looking to the future, maintaining stability and introduction to services in the community.

Has the approach changed over time?

The 218 service has continued to provide fundamentally the same service for women offenders as originally designed. Changes have been made to the structure and organisation of the programmes delivered, the management of the service, the roles and responsibilities of staff, the duration of engagement permitted, and the gathering and use of data held by the service in response to evaluation findings.¹¹

In what way is the approach 'asset based'?

Working in partnership with the women who engage with the service, doing 'with' them rather than 'to' them, 218 provides a flexible response to the needs and interests

"Making services fit people."

of each participant and strives to address the issues and find diversionary activities that suit each person in a supportive and inclusive way. By providing opportunities for shared experiences and learning, the

service helps to build positive relationships between the women. 218 supports positive dialogue and nurtures the development of trust, understanding and awareness of the issues facing female offenders.

Improvements in mental health, physical health and social health are reported by the majority of women who engage with the service, alongside improved confidence and self esteem, hope for the future and belief in their own abilities and achievements. 218 also assists women to make sense of their environments, take increased control over their own life circumstances and construct independent lives within their families and communities, enhancing their resources and capabilities as they progress. Individuals are supported to identify and overcome barriers to their social and economic inclusion in society and to realise their full potential, thereby improving life chances and circumstances.

"I want to grab this opportunity. I'm focused on recovery and getting the life I deserve."

The service recognises that, for many, 218 may be one of several interventions and support mechanisms women engage with in heading for an improved quality of life. The service is the start of a much longer journey that often takes years but by helping the women who engage with them to identify and focus on the assets and strengths within themselves, they may use these resources to make sustainable improvements in their lives.

How has success been measured?

Two full scale external evaluations of the work of 218 have been carried out in 2006¹¹ and 2010¹⁰. These evaluations have used a range of data sources, including Strathclyde Police re-offending data, and qualitative data about changes in softer outcomes as identified following one-to-one interviews with participants.

¹¹ Loucks, Malloch, McIvor and Gelsthorpe. Evaluation of the 218 Centre. Scottish Executive Justice Department Social Research, Edinburgh: 2006.

An examination of the cost benefit of the 218 service has also been undertaken¹⁰ and has shown that for each £1 invested in the service there is the potential to save £2.50 across health care, criminal justice, social care, the economy, and in costs to wider society. Research also suggests that this saving may be considerably higher if longer term benefits such as ceasing reliance on benefits and improvements to the circumstances of the children of women offenders are taken into consideration.

What are the strengths and challenges?

The 218 services provides a person centred, individually focused approach to support adult women offenders to break the cycle of offending and to make sustainable improvements in their lives. The holistic and integrated approach ensures that an individual care plan is in place for each woman and that women are empowered to make choices and are engaged in decision making about their own care.

The project adopts a flexible and adaptive response to the needs of each woman and provides a wide range of health related and therapeutic interventions and activities. The service further provides structure to the day and women are intensively supported to rediscover areas of interest and develop new skills.

“I’ve found out a lot about myself. The old me is coming back.”

Key findings from the evaluation¹⁰ indicate that project participants have reduced their levels of offending by 31% following contact with the service and have also experienced large reductions in sexual/injecting risk behaviour (a 61% reduction) and criminal involvement (a 46% reduction). During the period from 2007 to 2009 a significant reduction in the number of women sentenced

to periods of imprisonment in Glasgow (202 to 153) was recorded compared to a large increase seen in Scotland overall (614 to 1,169). There was also a significant reduction in the rate of women offenders imprisoned from Glasgow as a proportion of the Scottish total (33% to 13%).

Many participants reported significant reductions in substance misuse and violent behaviour alongside positive improvements to their mental and physical health, physical appearance and weight particularly after years of self neglect and drug use. Improvements in the women’s relationships with their families and children have also been reported.

A further strength of the service is the unique combination of GAS and TPS approaches within the same building, meaning that the service can effectively work with women who are substance misusers and who also suffer from mental health issues. Help and support is always available including over the phone to women who are feeling vulnerable after they have formally left the service.

The project recognises a number of challenges for the ongoing delivery of an integrated and ‘woman centred’ service. Supporting women who come to the service

with undiagnosed mental health issues and individuals who attend many times before they engage fully were highlighted as key challenges. It was also identified that some women start their journey with 218 unwillingly but often engage fully after criminal justice system restrictions have been lifted. Furthermore, some participants struggle initially with the structure of the service but over time come to value the routine and sense of purpose that the service offers.

“I’ve got a glimpse of hope for the future.”

On a personal basis, staff expressed energy and passion for the work that they do and gain tremendous personal benefits from being involved with the service. Staff also reflected on the scale of the challenges that many women face in life and feel that service is making a real difference too many.

Participants expressed high levels of gratitude and appreciation for 218 and for the help and support they had received. They felt that the service had given them hope for the future, the time and space to rediscover who they are and the opportunity to learn new talents and skills. Participants also articulated their pleasure in being able to share experiences with other women in a similar position and to support each other.

Rag Tag 'n' Textile





Rag Tag 'n' Textile

is a social enterprise and charity that works with vulnerable adults, teaching traditional textile skills in a therapeutic and supportive environment. The project specialises in creating recycled innovative products from donated fabrics.

What are the aims and objectives?

Rag Tag 'n' Textile aims to provide an environment that supports and encourages the personal growth and development of vulnerable adults through training and support and ultimately through employment whenever possible. The project also aims to use environmentally sound methods and resources to help deliver training and to produce high quality textile items which can be sold to generate income.

Why was the project set up? Has the approach changed over time?

Rag Tag 'n' Textile began in 2002 as a small craft group linked to TAG Highland, an NHS mental health project. The first members of Rag Tag 'n' Textile were people who were attending TAG and had no real outlet for their creative skills or who were on the waiting list for this project. The craft group originally ran one day per week and was user led from the very beginning.



At the outset the craft group had very little funding which led to a focus on recycling. A committee was formed and the group began to sell their crafts at local fairs. The proceeds allowed for a paid tutor and for good quality packaging and labelling of the goods. The project quickly developed a reputation as a well respected voluntary organisation that was breaking down barriers.

By April 2007 the craft group was officially named Rag Tag 'n' Textile, had a Board, had secured charitable status, moved to new premises and applied for funding to employ staff. The Rag Tag 'n' Textile shop opened in 2011. The project now has two workshops, a shop and an online shop.

“Everything we make is as individual as each participant.”

Who are the participants and the partners?

Based in Skye and Wester Ross in the Highlands, the project works with vulnerable adults who live local to the project base in Balmacara, near Kyle of Lochalsh. The project largely works with adults who are living with mental ill health, ME or have learning disabilities. The project currently has eight members of staff (three full time and five part time) and up to sixty volunteers, around 50% of whom have additional support needs.

The project works in partnership with a number of organisations including TAG Highland, Skills Development Scotland, The SHIRLIE Project, Health and Happiness and Ross-shire Women's Aid. To promote the Rag Tag 'n' Textile shop and workshop more widely, a series of events are planned for 2012 in partnership with the National Trust for Scotland, Skye and Lochalsh Environmental Forum, and a number of local businesses. Rag Tag 'n' Textile is currently funded by The Scottish Community Foundation, Comic Relief and Highland Council and from income generated from the project's

“Our approach is person centred. We work with each individual on what suits them best.”

business activities. Referrals to the project come from a number of different sources including local GPs, social work, community nurses, employability schemes and self referral.

The project is set up as a social firm and charity, which means that it must generate income in order to maintain its charitable status and also ensure that at least 25% of the staff team is from the project's target audience.

What does the project do?

The project specialises in creating recycled innovative products from donated fabrics and offers a wide range of high quality textile items including gifts, accessories, and cards and retro and designer clothing. Quality control is very important to the project and everything sold by the project is made in the Highlands by the project volunteers, other local craft people and by crafts people who have been supported to set up a small craft businesses by Rag Tag 'n' Textile.

The project is based on the recovery model: those engaged in the project are encouraged to participate in their own recovery which helps people to become more

able and less ill. The work of the project is person centred and person led with the involvement of each individual volunteer tailored to their own circumstances and interests. The project provides a creative atmosphere in which people teach and share traditional skills. Volunteers are included in the design process from start to finish which helps to develop their own appreciation of design ideas. Participants become well through diversionary activities, beginning to plan for tomorrow and looking to the future. Illness is not the focus at Rag Tag 'n' Textile.

The project also runs workshops for the general public and for local schools.

Training and workshops are delivered in felt making, rag-rugging, jewellery making, bookbinding, creative knitting and crochet, sewing, dressmaking and fashion design, pattern making, weaving, spinning, and card making. The project also delivers in-house training on literacy and numeracy skills, business development and administration, basic information technology, retail skills, workshop management and tutoring. A series of training manuals which can be used with groups of learners have been developed and the project delivers 'train the trainer' workshops.



Training is delivered from the project base in Balmacara, and also from the project workshop in Broadford and at the workshop the project shares with TAG Highland in Portree.

The project has received a number of awards including a Highland Diversity Award 2010, Scottish Business Diversity Award 2010 and the 2010 SURF award for best practice in community regeneration in the 'people' category.

In what way is the approach 'asset based'?

The project invests in participants as active citizens and encourages them to support their local community and be involved. Rag Tag 'n' Textile promotes a holistic view of mental illness focusing on the person rather than their symptoms. It supports everyone who comes to the project on a journey towards enhanced wellbeing, and

"Nobody feels that anyone is any better than them here – we're all just the same."

“It’s not fair to call these soft outcomes because to the people experiencing them they mean everything.”

encourages them to gain skills and confidence along the way. Furthermore, the project strives to reduce stigma and to challenge people’s expectations and attitudes towards mental illness. Each participant is known as a person, not a condition.

The project supports the recovery of individuals through inclusion, where everyone involved with

Rag Tag ‘n’ Textile contributes to the success and sustainability of the organisation and ***“everyone is valuable”*** and has a contribution to make. The project acknowledges that recovery is not a linear process and that there may be set backs along the way, but that they will still be there when an individual feels well enough to join again.

Rag Tag ‘n’ Textile works to empower individuals by supporting them to build confidence and to develop new skills and assets. Furthermore, the project supports people to make sense of their environment and take control of their life by enhancing their skills for resilience, relationships, knowledge and self esteem, through building mutually supportive networks and friendships.

How has success been measured?

Ongoing monitoring, assessment and review of volunteers is carried out during their time with the project. Each volunteer discusses and agrees what progress would look like for them and an individually tailored personal development plan is put in place. Personal development plans record the activities and training undertaken, achievements and short and long term goals for the future.

The project is currently undertaking a social return on investment analysis to assess and communicate the wider social and environmental impact of the work of the project.

What are the strengths and challenges?

Rag Tag ‘n’ Textile adopts innovative, creative and different ways of working with vulnerable adults through traditional arts and crafts with a modern twist. People gain confidence and learn new skills in a supportive environment which they find to be of great benefit to them and often their experience helps them to return to employment after illness.

In the last three and a half years, 110 people have been directly involved with the organisation, of which 22 have gone on to employment, four have gone on to further education and four are in the process of developing their own small craft businesses. The project has also helped deliver community education classes for 98 adults and have recycled more than eight tonnes of textiles, equating to over 13 tonnes of carbon offset. The project has shown positive effects on mental health improvement and general health and wellbeing.

The project provides a responsive community environment to volunteers which is flexible to their own individual requirements and provides a friendly, non-judgemental and welcoming environment to new volunteers. The projects supports trainees, volunteers and supported volunteers, from level one (minimal support required) to level six (need constant support), to learn and develop their creative skills, make their own creations which can be sold to support the project, and gain a sense of achievement.

The project provides a range of accredited training opportunities with the support of partner organisations, delivers a wide range of 'train the trainer' workshops and provides a number of work experience placements to young people and evening classes open to everyone.



Funding was identified as an ongoing challenge for the project. The short term nature of funding and the changing focus of funding streams were raised as particular issues. The working relationship between statutory organisations and voluntary associations was also acknowledged as a barrier to ongoing delivery of the project, especially in relation to the restructuring of council departments and the development of contracts.

At a personal level, staff expressed passion for the work they do and pleasure in being part of the 'journey' that participants take while they are with the project and in seeing people become well again. The creative nature of the project was highlighted as a unique setting for people to help each other through an informal network of support.

Volunteers expressed the enjoyment they gained from their involvement in the project and the sense of pride they get from supporting others and seeing them get better.

Fab Pad



Fab Pad



Fab Pad

is an interior design project that supports vulnerable young people to sustain their tenancies. The project provides a chance for young people in their first tenancy or at risk of homelessness to personalise their home and make it their own. By working with young people to build a stable home for themselves, and the provision of individualised careers development, young people are supported to progress into employment, training or education.

What are the aims and objectives?

Fab Pad aims to break the cycle of repeat homelessness amongst vulnerable young people. Fab Pad is an Impact Arts project. The overarching aims of Impact Arts are to:

- Use the arts to make a positive, lasting difference to people's lives.
- Develop and deliver excellent arts projects tailored to clients' needs.
- Contribute to the social and economic regeneration of the areas in which they work.
- Create quality employment opportunities for artists across all art forms.
- Combine social responsibility with sound and ethical business practice.

The Fab Pad project aims to reduce overall levels of youth homelessness and to support participants to improve their mental attitude and outlook on life, increase their aspirations, improve their self belief and build hope for the future.

Why was the project set up?

Fab Pad is based within the wider Impact Arts organisation which uses visual arts, music, drama, dance and technology to work in local communities with people of all ages. Impact Arts uses the arts as a tool for change – improving the environment, helping people to get back into work and improving quality of life. Fab Pad, established in 1998, was set up as an innovative youth housing project working with the most vulnerable young people in Glasgow. The 'Fab Pad concept' is now expanding throughout Scotland.

Who are the participants and the partners?

Fab Pad works with individuals aged between 16 and 25 years who have experienced homelessness or are at risk of losing their tenancy. In many cases this may be due to a change of circumstance; financial difficulties, family breakdown, leaving care, poor physical and/or mental health or not having the skills required to create and maintain a comfortable home environment.

Initially based in Glasgow, Fab Pad now also works throughout the Borders, North and South Ayrshire, Edinburgh, Stirling and Renfrewshire. Fab Pad currently works with over 600 young people per year across the entire project.

“We’ve seen huge changes from tiny little improvements.”

Working in partnership with local housing associations and local authority social work and addictions teams, Fab Pad is currently funded by Inspiring Scotland and additional local funds. Referrals to the project come from a range of statutory agencies, support workers, housing officers, and self referral, and can be taken at any time.

Impact Arts regional teams, including skilled management and experienced youth and community workers have has responsibility for the development and delivery of a geographical area and provides pastoral care to participants. Fab Pad interior designers are qualified designers who work with the participant both in their own home and in the project workshop.

What does the project do?

Fab Pad supports young people, as they embark on a new housing tenancy, to personalise their living space with additional social, health and employability benefits.

Each Fab Pad participant attends local weekly workshops to create items for their home over a period of six months. The main focus of Fab Pad is to offer the participant the opportunity to work closely with an interior designer to develop their ideas, create their space and learn the skills to turn their new tenancy into a home. This provides a platform from which the young person can settle, stabilise



their life and focus on developing aspirations for their future and helps the young person to take positive steps forward to secure training, educational or employment opportunities, thereby becoming a more active citizen.

The project has six key stages:

- an initial referral meeting;
- a visit to the young person's home with the interior designer to measure up and discuss ideas;
- weekly workshops with tuition from the interior designer and time and space to make small artwork items;
- inspiration and shopping trips;
- allocation of a shopping budget (£100 per participant) and graduation; and
- presentation of a certificate and progression into other opportunities.

The Fab Pad workshop programme is developed between participants, an interior designer and other Impact Arts tutors. The aim is to provide a mixture of design



input, support to develop creative ideas and practical skills training that will help the participant turn their house into a home by creating a plan for decorating and subsequently remaking their flat. The project supports participants to do this for themselves. The activities vary according to the ideas, needs and interests of the individual participant but may include: developing a design plan for a room(s); basic wall papering, painting and tiling; creating soft furnishings, accessories and artwork; use of lighting; and furniture renovation and transformation. Within the weekly workshops the young people initially work towards creating small items, such as a piece of artwork, a clock or a cushion thereby building skills and confidence in their abilities before moving on to make larger items for their homes. A task list is drawn up by the participant and the designer covering both tasks to be completed in the workshop and tasks to be completed at home. The task list can be reviewed at any time as a reminder to the participant of what they have achieved.

The project is provided as a free service. Participants receive basic materials, travelling expenses and lunch at each weekly workshop. Each participant also receives £100 which they are free to spend on items of their choice for their home. Every participant receives a starter pack which includes pencils, a tape measure, colour charts, catalogues, a sketch pad, and an individual workbook.

The project also organises and takes the young people on inspiration trips to a range of places they may not usually visit, including museums and art galleries. Further, a range of external agencies are invited to deliver short sessions at the weekly workshops covering a range of topics including cooking on a budget and debt management, to further support the young people to sustain their tenancies. This approach also keeps the project work fresh and interesting and normalises engagement with a range of services.

Towards the end of their engagement with the project, participants are also offered assistance from the Fab Pad Opportunities and Progressions Co-ordinator. They are encouraged to take positive steps towards securing training, education or employment and to become more active citizens. The Co-ordinator helps each participant to identify routes to positive destinations and assists with the creation of a CV and interview preparation if appropriate.

In what way is the approach 'asset based'?

Fab Pad works to empower young people by supporting them to build confidence and to develop new skills and assets. Both practical and softer skills and knowledge are created and developed. These skills can then be applied within their lives and new homes and can have a long-lasting positive impact. The project encourages young people who often have chaotic lives to make decisions and take back control of their future.

"Fab Pad doesn't do it for the participants but shows them how to do it for themselves."

“Every participant dictates their own participation.”

The project uses practical creative activities as a medium to build social skills and to create social networks. The project offers a new perspective on life for young people with a history of homelessness and/or substance

misuse. It also provides the time and space to build relationships with other young people in similar circumstances. The project focuses on the young person and the products they create they, and not on their problems.

Workshops within the Fab Pad project are delivered in a structured manner – once per week at a set time – but are also individually tailored, responsive and adaptable to the interests and circumstances of the participant. Tutors work in a non-judgemental way which allows the young person space to adjust to commitments and accept the responsibilities of managing a new house and often a new way of life. Through the development of trusting relationships, tutors and project staff encourage participants to talk about issues affecting their lives, as well as giving practical advice about a range of other issues, such as training and work opportunities as well as homemaking. The activity and the end product are highly personal and result in something real that the participant lives with everyday and can gain a sense of pride and achievement from.

How has success been measured?

A comprehensive system of ongoing monitoring and measurement is in place using a wide variety of tools, including initial referral and engagement forms and participant summary form and workbook. Data is collected around tenancy sustainment and numbers moving onto training, volunteering and employment as well as capturing softer outcomes such as changes in self esteem and confidence levels.

Using their participant workbook, Fab Pad encourages participants to record their own personal goals and to measure their progress. The workbook serves as a written and visual record of their achievements.



Samples of fabrics chosen and colours used alongside photographs of participants' work capture their Fab Pad journey.

External evaluation, including a social return on investment exercise, has been carried out for the North Ayrshire Fab Pad programme. The exercise reported that for every £1 that has been invested in the North Ayrshire Fab Pad project a social return on investment of £8.38 has been realised. The evaluation demonstrated substantial cost benefits as well as the soft, more human success of the project.

The project is currently working on establishing a follow up system for Fab Pad leavers to determine post twelve month destination and success.

What are the strengths and challenges?

Fab Pad has expanded across Scotland as it has proven to be a successful way of engaging some of the hardest to reach young people who are at risk of homelessness.

“Anchors in design of the project help negotiate chaos and chaotic lifestyles.”

The project is an effective way of breaking the repeat cycle of homelessness and helping progress young people who are living in, or moving to, a new tenancy. Of the young people engaged with the project, around 50% move on to positive opportunities (education, volunteering or employment) while over 95% successfully sustain their tenancies for more than 12 months. Fab Pad is

having a positive impact on youth homelessness: without enabling and empowering the young person many would walk away from their tenancies.

Through engagement with the project, participants have reported stability in their home lives and renewed family contact, increased sense of home ownership and homemaking skills, and sense of completion and achievement. Through the range of activities and opportunities provided, confidence and self esteem is increased, concentration improved and new friendships and relationships have been built.

Fab Pad has a clear project structure within which each individual makes decisions about their own involvement. The project is therefore tailored to the needs and interests of each participant. There are a number of anchors in the design of the project that make it solid and which counter-balance the disorder in the young person's life. The project structure also balances out the person-centred nature of the approach that is responsive and reactive to the individual and makes the project deliverable and manageable.

“If we had more we could do more – there are still ten thousand homeless presentations per year.”

Funding was identified as an ongoing challenge for the project. Fab Pad has been funded by a collection of funders in the last few years including Inspiring Scotland,

The Big Lottery and Wider Role among others. As each of these funds cover specific elements of the programme, many individual Fab Pad projects have not been fully funded from any one funder however. Staff reported that the uncertainty this brings, along with the short term nature of funding, led to difficulty in planning, and that the application process for further funds could be a time consuming process.

From a personal perspective, staff expressed high levels of fulfilment and enthusiasm for the work they do and found their involvement in the project to be rewarding. They particularly highlighted the creative role taken by the project and the benefits of taking a holistic approach to the threat of homelessness. Gratitude and positive feedback were received from the young people involved who recognise that the opportunity to personalise their homes can make a huge difference on outlook on life and hope for the future.

Appendices

Appendix A

Research Protocol: Case Study Research

Aims and objectives:

The overall aim of the study is to illustrate asset based approaches for health improvement in action by producing a set of case studies based on projects, services or initiatives that have taken such an approach.

Our objectives are to:

- Explore, within each case study, whether and how the principles underpinning asset based approaches have been applied.
- Highlight, as part of each case study, the strengths and positive outcomes of the approach taken as well as aspects which have proven challenging.
- Assess each case for evidence to suggest that asset based approaches are improving health and reducing health inequalities.
- Synthesise the learning across the case studies to draw out transferable lessons regarding asset based working.
- Identify policy implications and make recommendations for the future development of asset based approaches for health improvement.
- Produce a range of outputs that are accessible to policy makers, practitioners and researchers on

how asset based approaches for health improvement can be applied in Scotland.

Study design:

This study is a multiple case study investigation. Each case will initially be studied individually. When all case studies are complete, a synthesis of lessons learned across cases will be produced.

Sampling strategy:

From an initial long list of potential cases to be provided by a range of organisations (BIG Lottery, Equally Well, SCDC, CHEX, etc), cases will be selected via an intentional selection process utilising a checklist.

The cases will be selected to provide a mix of topic areas (e.g. healthy eating, physical activity, mental health, etc), geographies (across Scotland, both urban and rural) and target groups (youth, elderly, male, female, lone parents, families, etc).

Sampling unit:

The sampling unit is the community of interest (geographical or otherwise) served by the intervention, project, or community development approach as defined by those managing it.

Data collection methods:

Three key approaches will be taken to data collection:

- *Documents*: any planning documents and, if available, evaluation reports and final reports

relating to the case will be gathered and analysed. Documents will be the first port of call for data on each case.

- **Interviews:** used to answer anything that the other sources of data cannot and, in some cases, to verify previously gathered information. Interviews will be semi-structured based on a topic guide (to be developed).

Two different topic guides will be developed – one for use with staff / management and another for interviewing service users / community members.

- **Observation:** where possible and deemed necessary, parts of a project may be observed to assist in the information gathering process.

A framework for analysis that can be applied to all three types of data will be utilised with all cases.

Triangulation will be achieved by using different methods and data sources. Investigator triangulation may also be possible as two evaluators will work on the study.

Data analysis methods:

The data will be analysed according to a case study framework. Analysis will be within case initially and, subsequently, a thematic between-case analysis will be carried out to synthesise the learning.

Analysis will be supported by use of Atlas.ti software.

Related documents:

- Checklist for selecting case studies
- Interview topic guides
- Case study analysis framework
- Case study reporting pro forma
- Timeline for case study production

Appendix B Case Study Analysis Framework

Question		Source(s) of evidence
Title of case and overview.		Documentation
Where? Geographical area. Urban or rural.		Documentation
Community of interest / target group.		Documentation
Partnership arrangements and leadership / governance mechanisms.		Documentation Interviews
Timescales.		Documentation
Does the case explicitly declare any links to policy / strategy?		Documentation
Why was the approach initially taken? How was it identified as necessary?		Documentation (esp planning docs) Interviews
What is the stated aim of the approach?		Documentation
Has the approach changed over time? Why and in what way?		Documentation Interviews
Steps taken (activities, interventions, inputs, etc)? Where, by whom and for whom?		Documentation Observation Interviews
Is the case based on the principles of asset based working? In what ways does the case demonstrate an asset based approach to health improvement? (See Notes 1 and 2, below)		Documentation (including evaluation documents) Observation Interviews

Which assets / combination of assets were key to the approach taken? (See Note 3, below) How?	Documentation Interviews
Does the case recognise existing assets? And / or does the case support the development of new assets?	Documentation Observation Interviews
Did the approach including measuring the assets in the community of interest? If so, which method did they use? (See Note 4, below)	Documentation Interviews
Did the case utilise a system of measuring outcomes? If so, what was this system and what did it measure?	Evaluation documents Interviews
Strengths and positive outcomes of the approach?	Evaluation documents Interviews
Challenges?	Evaluation documents Interviews
Does the case demonstrate evidence of health improvement or a reduction of health inequalities as a result of the approach?	Evaluation documents Interviews
Does the case demonstrate any other benefits to those involved?	Evaluation documents Interviews
Does this case provide evidence to support a move towards asset based approaches to improve health and reduce health inequalities?	Documentation Interviews
DOCUMENTS ANALYSED	
KEY AREAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION	
INTERVIEW DETAILS	
GENERAL REFLECTIONS	
QUOTATION	

“A ‘health asset’ can be defined as any factor (or resource), which enhances the ability of individuals, groups, communities, populations, social systems and /or institutions to maintain and sustain health and wellbeing and to help to reduce health inequities. These assets can operate at the level of the individual, group, community, and /or population as protective (or promoting) factors to buffer against life’s stresses.”

(Morgan and Ziglio, 2011¹²)

Note 1

Values and principles of an asset based approach

- Working with people, rather than seeing them as passive recipients of services – ‘doing with’ rather than ‘doing to’.
- Helping people to identify and focus on the assets and strengths within themselves and their communities, and supporting them to use these assets to make sustainable improvements in their lives.
- Supporting people to make changes for the better by enhancing skills for resilience, relationships, knowledge and self esteem, including through building mutually supportive networks and friendships which help people make sense of their environments and take control of their lives.
- Shifting control over the design and development of actions from the state to individuals and communities.

¹² Morgan A, Ziglio E. Revitalising the evidence base for public health: an assets model. *Promotion and Education* 2007, 14:17.

Note 2

A deficit approach as compared to an asset based approach

The deficit approach	An asset based way of thinking
Starts with deficiencies and needs in community.	Starts with assets/resources in a the community.
Responds to problems.	Identifies opportunities and strengths.
Provides services to users.	Invests in people as active participants.
Emphasis on the role of services.	Emphasises the role of civil society.
Focuses on individuals.	Focuses on communities /neighbourhood and the common good.
Sees people as clients and consumers receiving services.	Sees people as participants and co-producers with something to contribute.
Treats people as passive and 'done-to'.	Helps people take control of their lives.
Fixes people.	Supports people to develop their potential.
Implements programmes as the answer.	Sees people as the answers.

Note 3

Which assets?

Individual level	Resilience
	Self esteem
	Sense of purpose
	Positive values
	Commitment to learning
Community level	Family and friendship (supportive) networks
	Intergenerational solidarity
	Community cohesion
	Affinity groups
	Religious tolerance and harmony
Organisational or institutional level	Physical, mental and social health
	Employment security
	Opportunity for voluntary service
	Religious tolerance and harmony
	Safe and pleasant housing
	Political democracy and social justice

Note 4**Methods for measuring assets**

Method	Description
Asset based community development (ABCD)	Making an inventory of assets and capacity, building relationships, developing a future vision, and leveraging internal and external resources to support actions to achieve it.
Asset mapping	Building an inventory of the strengths and contributions of the people who make up a community prior to intervening. Documenting the tangible (physical) and intangible (personal) resources of a community, viewing it as a place with assets to be preserved and enhanced, not deficits to be remedied.
Appreciative enquiry	Values and draws out strengths and successes in the history of a group, community or organisation by considering what is good as opposed to what is bad. Talks about successes rather than being defined by past failures.
Participatory appraisal	Cycle of research, information collection, reflection and learning with local community members trained to research the views, knowledge and experience of their neighbourhood.
Other method

Appendix C

Interview Schedules

Interview Topic Guide: Staff

Introduction:

I am a researcher with the Glasgow Centre for Population Health. We are finding out more about projects or services that value the capacity, skills, knowledge and connections in a community and build on these to result in positive outcomes for individuals and the community as a whole. These type of projects or services are said to be taking an 'asset based approach'. I would like to talk to you today about NAME OF PROJECT.

Role with the project and how came to be involved.

Describe what the project does.

- Aims
- Timescales

Who does the project work with?

- Target group – geographical (**where**) or otherwise?
- How do they get involved?
- Governance and partnerships?

Explain what steps the project takes and how it works.

- Where? By whom?
For whom?

- Existing assets or new assets?

Has the project always done it this way?

- Inception (**why?**)
- Changes / developments over time led by whom?

Strengths and positive outcomes?

- System of measurement?

Challenges?

Would you say that your involvement with the project has affected you in any way?

- Any benefits of being involved?
- Any dis-benefits of being involved?

Asset based approaches to health improvement:

- **value the capacity, skills and knowledge and connections in individuals and communities; and**
- **focus on the positive capacity of individuals and communities rather than solely on their needs, deficits and problems.**

Interview Topic Guide: Participants / Service Users

Introduction:

I am a researcher with the Glasgow Centre for Population Health. We are finding out more about projects or services that value the capacity, skills, knowledge and connections in a community and build on these to result in positive outcomes for individuals and the community as a whole. These type of projects or services are said to be taking an 'asset based approach'. I would like to talk to you today about NAME OF PROJECT.

How did you become to be involved with the project?

- How involvement initiated? Why?
- Changed over time?

Who does the project work with?

- Target group – geographical (where) or otherwise?
- How do they get involved?

Explain what steps the project takes and how it works in your experience.

- Where? By whom? For whom?
- Existing assets or new assets?

Describe what the project has done / is doing for you.

- Any language relating to asset based working?

Strengths and positive outcomes?

Anything difficult about being involved?

Would you say that your involvement with the project has affected you in any way?

- Any benefits of being involved?
- Any dis-benefits of being involved?

Asset based approaches to health improvement:

- **value the capacity, skills and knowledge and connections in individuals and communities; and**
- **focus on the positive capacity of individuals and communities rather than solely on their needs, deficits and problems.**

Appendix D

Case Study Contact Details

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