

PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER



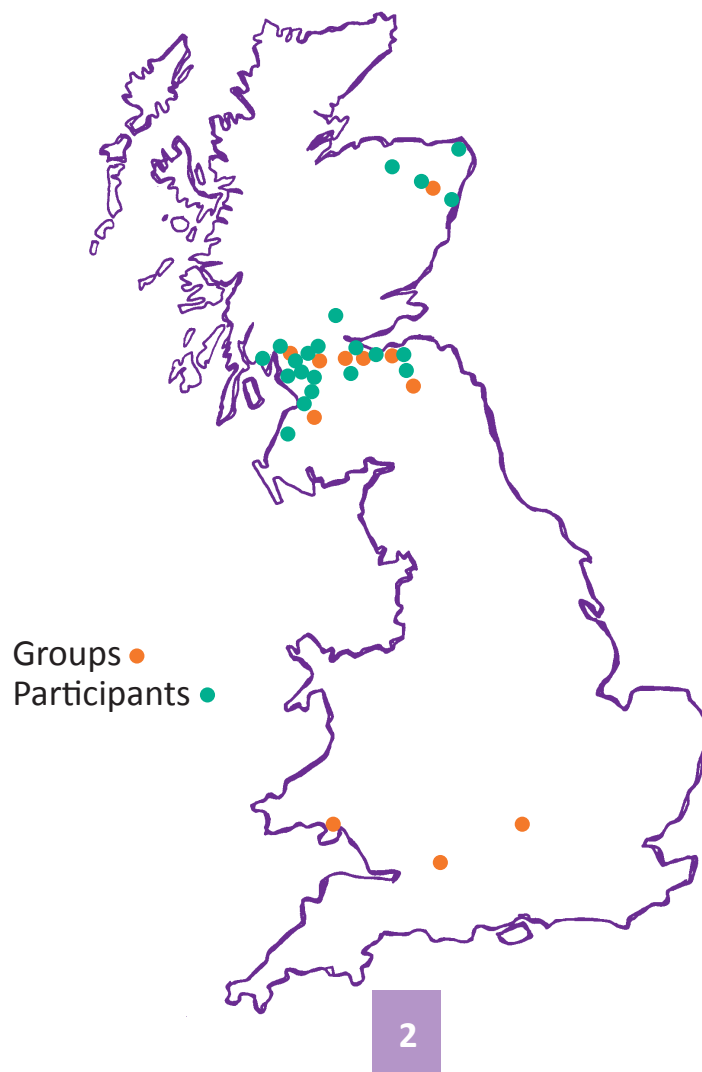
About the People Working Together event and about this report

In September 2011 Outside the Box held an event in Edinburgh that brought together examples of people working together.

Groups from across the UK shared information about what they do and the outcomes for their members and other people they work with.

People came from many parts of Scotland to find out more and explain what they do in their groups. They included people who use care services themselves, family carers, support staff, people with a policy or practice lead role in their organisations, members of committees that manage voluntary organisations, and staff from local authorities and health services.

We had workshops and World Café discussions which explored some topics in more detail.



We talked about the practical aspects of getting work underway: how to get started, keeping going, publicising what you are doing and the difference it makes, supporting volunteers and people taking on peer support roles, and more.

We also looked at the big policy issues, such as Self-Directed Support and Co-production: what these mean, how these policies can benefit people, how people have already been involved in shaping the policies and are looking forward to being involved in what happens next.

The style of the day was planned around what we have learned and people's suggestions on helping people take part and learn from each other.

- People came from many different situations as well as from different places.
- People with disabilities and people who use services were part of the teams explaining what their group do.
- A few groups had planned to come along and share information about what they did, but other things happened and they were not able to come along that day. So we had written material available and their contacts are in this report.
- There was enough time for people to get round all the stalls and get to workshops.
- People could just sit and have tea and a chat if they wanted to.

“It was so informal, really easy to talk to people.”

“It was nice being part of such a varied audience.”

“I loved the enthusiasm people brought and so many ideas about how to get good quality work when money is tight.”

“Thank you very much indeed for organising it the way you did, it was impactful and very much a different approach that worked for me and I am sure for others that came along.”

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“Amazing to hear so many people’s opinions.”

“It was one of the best networking days I have attended, I’m sure some of our paths will cross again.”

“Not just ideas, but ‘how do you do it?’ ‘How do we get started?’ When is the next event?”

“Can you do more events like this?”

“Good to meet different organisations from different backgrounds.”

“The wide mix of people meant I was hearing experiences that I don’t usually come across. It was stimulating and challenging in all sorts of good ways. More events like this one please.”

Since the event, people have been getting in touch with people they met and following up contacts.

The aim of this report is to let people who were not there on the day also join in.

- You will get the contact details for the groups that had information stalls.
- There are notes from the discussions and workshops.
- We gathered feedback from the people taking part as the day went on, and you can see what they have suggested.

People can use this report in several ways.

- You can take some of the ideas described here and adapt these to suit your situation.
- You can use the report to discuss plans with colleagues and friends.
- It can spark off more ideas about the ways in which people work together in your area, or in your organisation.

You may also want to run an event like this in your area, which brings together people with different experiences, groups doing a wide range of loosely-related activities, and some services or groups from outside the local area.

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“We want to get dates-n-mates up to our area.”

“I hope this will inspire more community groups to set up projects like these. Brilliant.”

“I was feeling stuck with a problem of how to develop one of our services. I’m going back with ideas and contacts to help me.”

“Great ideas! Going back with lots to talk about.”

“I really found it useful and I am already benefiting from the contacts I made at the event.”

“I really enjoyed the day and sharing experiences with other agencies. We both came away with more new ideas.”

“We are going back to talk to people about starting a buggy walk in our area.”

“Great material on local projects that involve and benefit older people. Lots to think about. Thanks for introducing me to organisations I didn’t know about before.”

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Examples of People Working Together

These are notes on the activities of the groups which contributed to the People Working Together event. There are contact details to let you find out more about what they do and get in touch if you have questions or want to find out even more.

Grampian Opportunities

Grampian Opportunities supports disabled people and people with mental health problems have choice and control in their lives.

Grampian Opportunities supports its members to increase their confidence and skill levels by providing supported opportunities in admin/office work, marketing, advertising, finance, events organisation, journalism, IT, driving and much more.

Grampian Opportunities runs its own mentoring service – New Explorations Mentoring. This gives members the opportunity to explore issues and the chance to talk through experiences and problems with a trained mentor, who will support them to reach a decision with which they are happy and confident about.

Grampian Opportunities also has a number of other projects including Voices for Change. This is a peer-led project designed to give disabled people a voice and the chance to give their opinions on the services they receive.

T. 01467 629675

E. info@grampianopportunities.org.uk

www.grampianopportunities.org.uk

up2us Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire up2us began in summer 2009. It brings together people who have different experiences and disabilities.

The group are creating community networks, so people can get together with others who share their interests. People can pool

their personalised care budgets by sharing support worker time and transport costs, or organising classes that let more people take part in new activities and share the cost.

The project has developed their own social networking site to let people across Oxfordshire get in touch with each other. They are beginning to share information about local activities that are open to the whole community and to keep in touch with friends. User-led groups can also use it to advertise their activities and tell more people about their group.

You can see this at www.up2uscommunity.co.uk

up2us Oxfordshire is part of a bigger programme. There are 6 locations across England where people who receive personal care budgets are exploring ways to work together to make greater use of the resources they have. There is more information at www.otbds.org

CDSM Interactive Solutions

CDSM is a partner in the up2us Oxfordshire project.

CDSM Interactive Solutions is committed to creating and supplying effective technology-based solutions for learning and development organisations.

CDSM worked with their partners to develop the safe and secure community portal called 'People & Places'. It is a secure, moderated, social-networking website for people from vulnerable community groups. It is also for people who work and support people from these groups. We believe many people from vulnerable groups would benefit from using popular social networking sites, but unfortunately many people do not have the confidence or the appropriate skills to do so safely.

People & Places changes this once and for all! It provides a safe, moderated online environment for those who want to stay in touch

with their friends and family online. It also provides service users with the opportunity to meet new people who share similar interests and activities. It offers methods to effectively support communities of people who use services who wish to become more self sufficient.

T. 01792 463865
E. office@cdsm.co.uk
www.cdsm.co.uk

Mind Waves

Mind Waves is a pilot programme aimed at promoting mental health through positive use of the media.

There is support for people who want to create and share news stories about activities which promote mental wellbeing. The programme shows how people's mental wellbeing is enhanced, including collective activities where groups of people have got together to promote mental wellbeing.

The aim is to raise awareness among the general public about mental wellbeing and recovery and about what makes a healthy community for everyone. The programme will make use of a wide range of ways to promote messages about mental wellbeing, such as social networking, blogs, internet sites such as YouTube, newspaper articles, recording pieces for the radio and using the creative arts.

There will also be material that any community group use to get across their own message about mental wellbeing.

The programme is funded by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and brings together a range of partners. Outside the Box provides a base and support for the Community Reporters.

There is more information on the Outside the Box website.

www.otbds.org

Neighbourhood Links

The Neighbourhood Links Project is a service that is established in the Scottish Borders.

The aim is to promote and develop the capacity of voluntary and community organisations to provide additional, local, community support to those people who have low/moderate level support needs. The project also aims to contribute to the social inclusion agenda.

The project helps people to access and benefit local services, for example by signposting to local groups. We help support people to have more social contact.

Neighbourhood Links can provide appropriate short term support (for a maximum of 12 weeks) which is not recognised as the statutory responsibility of the Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders. We support hospital discharge for people who no longer need to remain in hospital and we complement the role of community based services.

The Neighbourhood Links Project is a partnership project between British Red Cross and the Borders Voluntary Community Care Forum.

T. 01896 751888 - Galashiels (main office) or 01890 883673 - Coldstream
E. neighbourhoodlinks@redcross.org.uk
F. 0845 071 4672

Pilmeny Development Project

The Pilmeny Development Project is based in North East Edinburgh. They encourage people to develop their ability to meet their own needs and to participate in all aspects of community life.

The overall aim is to support local residents and groups and to encourage appropriate self-help initiatives towards the identification and resolution of their problems. They work with local people to identify and deliver actions which contribute to sustainable

development of both individual and groups to improve their quality of life.

In their work with older people and carers they seek to encourage active engagement with a wider range of Community Planning, Health and Community Care service providers to ensure that quality 'Joint Future' and joined up arrangements are in place for older people in North East Edinburgh.

Some of the projects that involve older people are:

- North East Edinburgh Community Action Group.
- Leith and Portobello older people's forums.
- North East Edinburgh Older Men's Health and Wellbeing Project.
- Pilmeny Women's Positive Health & Wellbeing Group.
- 50+ weekly Drop in.
- The Leith Community Connector pilot project.

Pilmeny Development Project is also involved in partnership working and in developing work including:

- New Spin intergenerational project.
- MECOPP (Minority Ethnic Carers of People Project).
- Older Male Carers Group.
- The Milan project which provides services for BME elders from Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Mauritian communities.

T. 0131 553 2559

E. pilmenyproject@btconnect.com

www.pilmenydevelopmentproject.co.uk

Stepping Stones

The Stepping Stones Organisation provides support to people who have experience of mental health problems. The organisation is led by its members and governed by a Board of Directors of past and present service users.

Stepping Stones offer a needs-led and recovery-focussed service. It aims to help and support members individually or as part of a group, with the goal of regaining and maintaining good mental health.

Stepping Stones ensures each person has the opportunity to get the best support for them from the services offered. They encourage the people they support to make the best use of the support they receive from other agencies and organisations as well as their communities.

Stepping Stones is based in Clydebank and Dumbarton and is accessible to anyone resident in West Dunbartonshire.

T. 0141 941 2929

E. stepping-stones@btconnect.com

www.stepstones.org.uk

Carr Gomm

Carr Gomm is a person-centred organisation that supports people to lead their lives safely and to do the things they want to do: in day-to-day living, in planning for the future and in realising dreams. We do this by providing support at home and in supported services.

Community Development is about enabling people to take part in activities which develop their own interests along with other people and contribute to enhancing their own lives and the communities they are part of.

The Carr Gomm Community Development Team can work with the people we support individually or in groups to assist them to get involved with issues and activities they are interested in.

This might mean taking part in groups already working in someone's community as well as working with other people supported by Carr Gomm who might share their interests. This could be about hobbies, voicing your views and campaigning for social change, meeting people to arrange and attend social events together, or learning and trying out new things.

One example is the 'community growing' project in Lochend in north east Edinburgh. The project will encourage and support people in the local community to gain new skills and confidence, and to build relationships by growing fruit and vegetables together. The project will be for everyone with an interest in spending time at the garden and will be welcoming and accessible. There are strong links between community growing and the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

Carr Gomm are committed to finding new and creative ways to include people who can find it difficult to feel part of their community, whether through disability, mental health or other reasons. Other examples of ways people get involved include arts and drama, creative writing, a Healthy Kitchen project and much more.

The film which Kevin showed - Access All Areas - is available at www.vimeo.com/27249628

T. 01324 722091 / 07770 643929

E. info@carrgomm.org

www.carrgomm.org

Bonny Strollers and Step Forth

Bonny Strollers is part of Step Forth which is a local walking for health initiative that is funded by Paths for All. The aim of Step Forth is to get more people active within their own communities especially those who take little physical activity or live in areas of poor health. It is aimed at all ages and abilities and the walks are free and accessible.

In mid 2011 there are 17 walks set up in the Falkirk area which are all lead by volunteer walk leaders. All walk leaders are fully trained by Paths for All.

The Bonny Strollers is a group of mums who live in Bonnybridge and who go on regular buggy walks together. The buggy walks provide an opportunity and encouragement for mums to get out walking with their babies. The impacts that the mums describe include benefits for their physical health and for their mental health and wellbeing. There

are also benefits for their babies from getting out into the fresh air. The Bonny Strollers was the first buggy walk in the Falkirk area. The experience of the Bonny Strollers has encouraged many more groups to start similar walks. The women who joined the first group have worked with NHS staff and the Step Forth Co-ordinator to help spread the learning. The project has featured in national professionals' conferences about promoting good health and wellbeing among young mothers and is now featuring in international conferences.

T. 01324 504556 / 01324 504568
E. barbara.mcconnell@falkirk.gov.uk
www.falkirk.gov.uk/walksforum

FAST

FAST (Future of Addiction Services Team) draws together people who live in West Dunbartonshire and have experience of addictions. We listen to the views of people who have a drug and/or an alcohol problem and think about ways services can help them. Sometimes this is the specialist addiction services and sometimes it is the services that are there for anyone who lives in West Dunbartonshire.

FAST represents the views of people living with addictions to the plans that are being made by West Dunbartonshire Council, the NHS in West Dunbartonshire and to other organisations. We signpost people to organisations that can provide them with services. FAST also does practical things themselves that complement other services.

FAST and Outside the Box have worked together to produce booklets that give practical help to people who are in recovery. The first one describes ways people can use ordinary community resources such as leisure facilities and shows people how to get access to services such as community learning. We then produced a booklet to help people cope with the Christmas and New Year period.

There is more information on the group and copies of the booklets on the Outside the Box website: www.otbds.org

T. 0750 236 9418
E. Sharon@alternativeswd.org or fastnews@hotmail.co.uk

Cumnock and Doon Valley Credit Union

Cumnock Credit Union is a co-operative financial institution that is owned and controlled by its members and operated for the purpose of promoting thrift, providing credit at competitive rates, and providing other financial services to its members.

Credit unions are not-for-profit organisations which work because members save regularly creating a 'pool' of money from which loans can be made to members. Each local credit union may have some paid staff members but most of the work and decisions are made by members and volunteers.

Anyone who lives or works in East Ayrshire is eligible to join the Cumnock and Doon Valley Credit Union.

T. 01290 420044

E. cumnock.creditunion@googlemail.com

There are other credit unions in many other parts of Scotland. The Scottish League of Credit Unions has contact details for local credit unions across Scotland.

T. 0141 774 5020

E. info@scottishcu.org

www.scottishcu.org

Poverty Alliance - the EPiC Programme

The Poverty Alliance seeks to influence policies at local and national level that will have an impact on poverty and will create the conditions for a more socially just Scotland. We carry out this work through a range of activities: campaigns, lobbying, networking, project work. Central to our approach is working alongside people experiencing poverty to have their voices heard.

The EPiC project offers a two day training course for community groups on how best to get their voices heard. The course explores

how policies in Scotland and at the UK level impacts on people with experience of poverty. The training course is free of charge and all participants' travel costs are refunded.

Another key component of the EPiC project is the community research which is co-ordinated by our Community Research Officer, and works with a range of community groups in facilitating collective decision making about the research topic, training in basic research skills and working alongside the groups in presenting the final product.

The EPiC project also seeks to influence policy at national level through the Stakeholder Forum and the Scottish Assembly to Tackle Poverty events.

T. 0141 353 0440
E. admin@povertyalliance.org
www.povertyalliance.org

dates-n-mates

dates-n-mates is a friendships and dating support service for people in Scotland who have learning difficulties. It is based at C-Change for Inclusion, which is a voluntary organisation based in Glasgow. But dates-n-mates has members all over Scotland.

The staff team includes 2 directors who have learning difficulties. They have been involved from the start, to help ensure that all the publicity and processes work well for the potential members.

There have been 4 overall objectives for dates-n-mates.

- To raise the profile of people with learning difficulties getting opportunities to have personal relationships and friendships.
- To provide opportunities for members to find friendships and personal relationships.
- To make a difference in the lives of members, such as having more confidence and feeling more included in their communities.

- To develop a model for the delivery of these activities that will be sustainable in the future. This will let people in other places start their own project or link in to what we do, or maybe a bit of both approaches – as long as it leads to more opportunities around friendships and personal relationships for more people.

T. 0141 427 2957

E. info@dates-n-mates.co.uk

www.dates-n-mates.co.uk

Scottish Huntington's Association

Huntington's disease (usually referred to as HD) is a genetic condition that affects the way someone's brain functions. This in turn has consequences for their physical movements, the way they process and remember things, and the way they experience and express feelings. When someone has HD, each of their children has a 1 in 2 chance of inheriting the gene and developing the condition.

Scottish Huntington's Association (SHA) is a Scottish charity established by families living with Huntington's disease. We began in 1989 when there were very few services for people with HD. We set up family support groups and since then have developed an extensive network of specialist services.

The HD Specialists give advice on managing the symptoms of HD, to make life more comfortable for someone who has HD and help people get access to other services. There are specialist HD services in Highland, Grampian, Tayside, Fife, Lothian, Lanarkshire, Glasgow and Ayrshire. We can also offer advice and support for people who live in areas that are not covered by the specialist HD services.

We have 2 Youth Advisors: one covers the North East and is based in Aberdeen and the other cover the South West and is based in Glasgow.

SHA supports a network of family branches. These are run by family members and provide information and peer support. The groups

also do fundraising and are able to help people in practical ways by providing welfare grants and provide social activities. In mid 2011 there are currently groups in Tayside, Lothian, Forth Valley, Aberdeen, Elgin, Glasgow and Ayrshire.

Our websites and our publications have information for everyone, in any part of the country. The Youth Services have their own website with resources for children, teenagers and for young adults. It also has material to help parents and for teachers who are in touch with young people who are affected by HD.

We often give advice to staff in other services, to help them give good support to people who have HD. We also have publications that are useful for staff in other services.

People living with HD and family members have worked with staff at SHA and Outside the Box to produce a 'road map'- a guide to help people who have recently learned that they are affected by HD.

- It draws together people's advice based on their experience of day-to-day life when you or someone in your family has HD.
- It also has contact points for people who want more information on specific topics.

Printed copies are available from the SHA National office and there is a copy on the SHA and Outside the Box websites.

The SHA website has contact details for staff and the Family Branches. People can also contact the National Office.

T. 0141 848 0308
E. sha-admin@hdscotland.org.uk
www.hdscotland.org.uk

National Development Team for Inclusion

The National Development Team for Inclusion is a not-for-profit organisation concerned with promoting inclusion and equality for people who risk exclusion and who need support to lead a full life. We have a particular interest in issues around age, disability and mental health.

Our main aims are to:

- Shape and influence policy and public debate.
- Enable a stronger voice of people to be heard.
- Support services to work differently so that they promote inclusive lives.
- Support communities to be welcoming and inclusive.

These are some of the areas we are working on:

- Person centred approaches.
- Housing and home.
- Transition and life chances.
- Employment and paid work.
- Ways to involve families of people who use support.
- Co-production.
- Heaving the voices of older and disabled people.
- Developing the way support and services are commissioned by local authorities.
- Leadership within organisations.

We work across the UK.

T. 01225 789135
E. office@ndti.org.uk
www.ndti.org.uk

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“Buggy walks – enthusiastic, really important. Good idea and pleased to hear about it and lots of walks could happen in other places. It’s preventative – great for people’s mental health and wellbeing.”

“GO are inspiring. The volunteers are the service users. It’s so simple and so mind-blowing. And so right.”

“up2us social network idea is win win: people can talk, link up ideas, all see what each other is doing, community led.”

“We liked the Healthy Kitchen project and cookbook that Carr Gomm have done. That’s something we can do that will make a big difference for our members.”

“Good to meet lots of new people and learn about what’s happening ALL over Britain.”

“Good to hear about local authorities and health service staff being part of innovative ideas and supporting community-led groups.”

“I got a lot of useful information about the projects featured here and also about other work which the larger organisations do. The people who were here gave me contacts which may help benefit several individuals who I support. I’m hoping today will lead to good outcomes for a few people quite quickly and then in time to good outcomes for other people too.”

“It was great seeing the Credit Union. It reminded me that there is one in our area. Our group have not made contact with them, yet they could help our members in so many ways. And a helpful reminder to make better use of other mainstream resources!”

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“Good to hear about examples of so many different types of participation. Together they have given me ideas of more ways people in our area could influence services and get involved in wider social issues as well.”

“Please pass on a big Thank You to all the people who spent so much time answering questions about what they do and then giving presentations. They all deserve a medal for their patience and enthusiasm.”

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Policies and topics

These are notes from what people said in workshops, discussions and feedback about some of the topics that underpinned much of the work people are doing.

Using social media to reduce isolation

We had examples of projects based around the use of social media.

- up2us Oxfordshire and CDSM have worked together to develop a safe social networking site, which lets people keep in touch with friends and make new friends.
- Mind Waves is using social media to share positive news about mental health and wellbeing. They expect that many of the stories will show ways in which people are part of their communities.
- Grampian Opportunities have used technology to enable members to keep in touch with each other.

Participants' ideas on how to develop social contacts in their areas - notes from the workshop session run by up2us

How do you find out what's on in your area?

Newspaper, library, leaflets, 'what's on' local, links in communities (villages), word of mouth, 'popping in' if passing, 'online Borders' network.

How our online community could help

Reduce isolation, do things together, friendships, information in one place.

How rural is your area? What are the problems?

Transport (lack of), lack of interest in courses, lack of knowing other people in the community, lack of the 'grapevine'.

How our online community could help

Share information, can get advice, do things together, what's going on when, online community.

Online issues; are some of us excluded?

People who would like to learn how to use computers.

How do you find other people with similar interests to you?

Neighbours, attending a local group or class.

How our online community could help

Build confidence, buddy up, share information or advice.

Self-directed support

Self-directed support is when a person chooses to have their own budget for their care, which they use to get the support services they want. People can have the level of control they want, whether or not they manage the money side. The aim is to give people choices and enable them to have a good life. Self-directed support is being developed in Scotland and many more people will be using this over the next few years.

Some of the groups have been doing a lot to promote and help develop self-directed support in their areas.

- up2us Oxfordshire was set up to help people who use self-directed support to find ways to make their resource go further. Doing an activity with friends often means that people can share support worker time and some other costs, for example. The on-line community has helped people make their resources go further and also have a better quality of life, with more friends and more opportunities.
- Grampian Opportunities supports members to use Direct Payments. They have also contributed to the development of the new policies and arrangements in Scotland and are working to raise awareness about the potential value of self-directed support.
- Carr Gomm and other organisations that provide support services are adapting what they do, so they can support people who use self-directed support.
- NDTi developed a guide called Personal Budgets for Older People – Making it Happen. This was developed with older people, staff from local authorities and other organisations. There are case examples which show how personal budget can make a difference for older people and practical suggestions to make implementation easier.

“I liked the ideas from up2us about getting together with your pals and putting your support money together to do more.”

“I’m feeling more confident now about asking the social worker for a mix of different services for my mum.”

“We’re away with lots of ideas about how our group could work alongside other services to be part of the services people receive.”

“It is reassuring to hear how other voluntary organisations are getting involved in this – big ones and small ones. There was something that came round the other week from the local authority about Self Directed Support and I thought, ‘that’s not for us.’ I’d better get it out of my deleted mail because this is for us.”

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Update since the event

Outside the Box, Grampian Opportunities and Stepping Stones are starting a new project, to develop the awareness and confidence of user-led service providers about self-directed support.

We have been awarded a grant by the Scottish Government. This is part of a bigger programme which will produce a lot of good ideas and learning for people and organisations across Scotland over the next 4 years.

Where to find out more

The Scottish Government has a website which has information about self-directed support for people who use services, families and other carers, and for organisations that provide support services.
www.selfdirectedsupportscotland.org.uk

The NDTi publications are available through their website www.ndti.org.uk.

There will be updates on new project on the Outside the Box website.

Co-production

Co-production is a phrase which is used when the people who use a service are also part of providing the service or producing the intended change. It can be when someone works alongside staff to improve their own health and wellbeing. It can also be a group of people are involved in designing and delivering a service.

It is a key part of government policies such as Reshaping Care for Older People.

- Co-production is part of the way many of the groups at this event work, both as part of specific services and often as part of the ethos behind all of their work.

- FAST developed their community resources booklets as a way of solving the problem facing many people who have an addiction, when they need something to keep them active and away from drugs and alcohol, but they haven't got much money. Many professionals described this as a difficult problem that would need a lot of additional resources. The ideas that FAST came up with do not cost much and support people to become more involved in their community – which is another source of support for people in their recovery. They looked at the problem in a different way and came up with a different solution.
- NDTi have developed a guide on co-production with older people. It sets out 7 principles to help local authorities and their partners, including local communities, work together and improve older people's influence at all levels of service commissioning and delivery. It shows what 'co-production' means and how we'll know it's happening with older people who need support in their lives. There are postcards to go with the guide.

“Co-production is a simple idea: it's about individuals, communities and organisations having the skills, knowledge and ability to work together, create opportunities and solve problems.” (NDTi)

“It sometimes feels as if big agencies are using the term 'co-production' to make it sound hard to understand, and something they are in charge of. But the whole point is that it is people working together.”

“Lots of community groups do this. We have always worked this way. But it feels as if we are now getting tied up in regulation and Performance Indicators and target because it's in the official policies.”

“Co-production is about being human. It's what people have always done.”

“You need to have trust and real relationships. That takes time to build up.”

“This is about drawing together all sorts of contributions – people who use services, their families and friends, neighbours and people in the local community, and staff who work in services. And it has to be sharing ideas and finding solutions – together coming up with something that is better than any of us could have done on our own.”

“It is a really exciting time. I know public bodies are probably doing it because the money is getting tighter. But it is still the right thing to do. There are lots of staff who are keen to work in partnership with the people they support, and we want to work with them. This is our chance.”

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Where to find out more

The Scottish Government website has more information about Reshaping the Care of Older People. This explains the strategy around changing the support provided to enable older people to stay well and get support to stay in their own home and community. There is also information about the Change Fund, which is extra money from the Scottish Government and is designed to support the development of innovative services.

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/care/reshaping

The NDTi materials are all available to download from the Publications part of the website www.ndti.org.uk

Good practice around peer support

Peer support is when 2 or more people who have a shared lived experience give each other support. Usually it is a 2-way process – each person is both giving and getting support. Sometimes it is informal, for example when parents meet at the school gate. Other examples are planned and explicit, such as support groups for people who have had a particular illness.

For the more formal groups, there are often additional support structures: examples include a facilitator (who may also be someone who has had that experience) and agreed ways of working such as respecting confidentiality. There can be similar structures around one-to-one peer mentoring or other types of peer support.

The groups at the event included examples of different types of peer support.

- Grampian Opportunities and Stepping Stones have services that are based around peer support. They are well planned and take account of recognised good practice and quality standards.
- The mums who go on the Bonny Strollers buggy walk say they get 2 types of support – from the Health Visitor who is on the walk with them and the peer support from the other mums. The peer support is not a formal, explicit aspect of the walking group – it just happens.
- The road map which Scottish Huntington's Association developed is based on the tips and hints of people who are affected by HD – people giving and getting peer support through a publication, as well as through other routes.

“The discussion here today was really helpful, hearing about the potential risks as well as the benefits. It’s good to know others have found how to make peer support work well by getting the preparation right – ground rules, shared understanding and boundaries, and ways to keep everyone safe.”

“Hearing other people who have gone through similar experiences to you is essential. You need that as well as support from staff. It has helped me move away from dependency and isolation.”

“We find our peers for different aspects of our lives. It’s something we’ve all been doing for years: talking to and learning from each other.”

“We want to learn more about peer support. We hope to learn from groups who are here today.”

“Peer support is a way of making a contribution and feeling valued. It is an opportunity to use your experience in a positive way.”

“It would be useful to have the best practice to refer to. Where to start? How to develop it further?”

“We are going to go back and tell others in the group about it and look at how we can use peer support more. It could add a lot to the way we are developing the service.”

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Developing and running community groups

Some of the people who came to the event are involved in running a community group – for example, as members of the committee.

One of the issues they raised was the importance of running an effective group as well as getting right the activities the group provides.

- Some of the people at the event had a lot of experience of being on committees of community groups while others were new to this role.
- Outside the Box provides support to community groups around developing the organisation and becoming a stronger committee, as well as on developing new types of services.
- We are also developing a project called Learning the Craft, which will provide more opportunities for people to learn from others who have developed new community groups.

“

“Most of our committee are new to all this. It feels as if there is a lot to learn about how the committee side should work – elections, committee meetings, the procedures we need to have and so on.”

“We’ve realised that we need to get the running the group part right before we take on all the new ideas that we are so excited about.”

“Part of our strength is the way our members contribute.”

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“It takes time to learn people’s strengths and to develop trust.”

“It is all part of gaining self-confidence and self esteem.”

“Some of the places that provide training for voluntary organisations don’t really understand about committees that are run by members who have that disability or whatever. It’s been good to have the chance to talk to people from other groups that work in a similar way to ours.”

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Where to find out more

There will be updates on Learning the Craft through the Outside the Box website: www.otbds.org

Other sources of advice for community groups include SCVO (the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations) and local Third Sector Interface Organisations.

Suggestions for action

Suggestions for Government and policy makers

Government and other public bodies need to listen to the people who use services – they are the best managers of their conditions and their lives. But it will be better if it happens in ways like today. Let people raise the issues rather than deciding beforehand what you want to ask.

We want to encourage the Government and NHS and Councils to be innovative and to then encourage others to think creatively and not rely so much on the types of services and responses that are already there. It is not about providing one good service but about having lots of choices.

Government needs to give initiatives time to gather evidence of the long term benefit, such as buggy walks and peer support services.

It would be good for local authorities to get the information about up2us and the websites CDSM have developed. Can there be an event for them, to learn about how the local authorities in other places are using this approach?

Suggestions for community groups

Organisations need to get out and work with people outside their present user group. There are more ideas when you listen to more people.

Voluntary and community groups also need to remember about creating more choices for people and being innovative.

Get information out about what you do and about the difference it makes for people. Community-led groups' ideas and experiences need to get heard by the right people.

We need to learn how to market ourselves differently.

Think partnerships. There is a lot of scope for groups to work together, and not just with the organisations we have known for a long time.

Thanks

Outside the Box wants to thank:

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