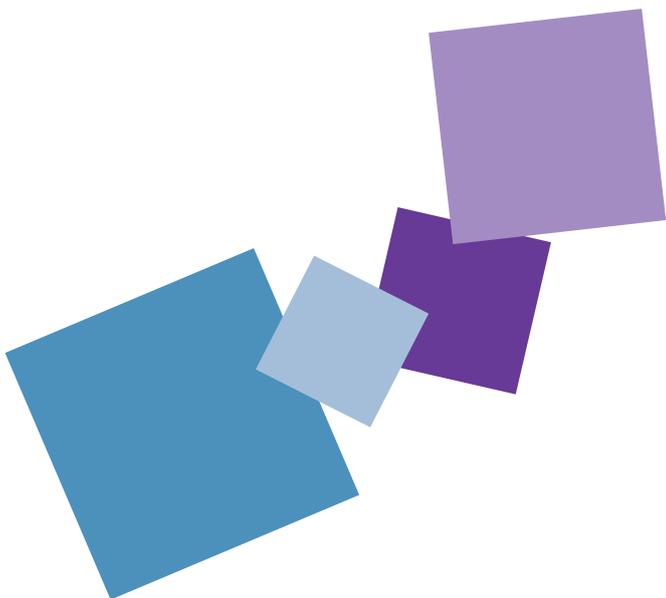


outsidethebox 

OUTSIDE THE BOX ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017



300

people got support for their own needs. They built skills and confidence in running the group or in their own lives.

“WORKERS NEED MORE OPPORTUNITIES LIKE THIS TO BE ABLE TO SHARE THEIR SKILLS AND ALSO CELEBRATE AND VALIDATE THE WORK THAT THEY ARE DOING.”

26

We worked with 26 projects.

ABOUT US

Outside the Box works with groups and people across Scotland to help them make a difference in their communities.

- We give practical support that enables people to have the confidence and skills to establish new ventures and sustain what is already there.
- We encourage people to think of themselves and other people as citizens who should have a voice and who can make a contribution.
- Since we began in 2004 we have learned from the thousands of people and hundreds of groups with whom we've worked about what sorts of community development support work for them.
- We understand the issues that affect people and the strategies and policies. We help community-based groups show how what they do contributes to making positive changes for people and gives people a voice.

There is more about the organisation and the people who work with us at www.otbds.org

900

or so people benefitted from the activities that we helped make happen, such as members of groups who used the services and activities that started there.

5000

people (roughly) took part in events or used our publications. They used what they had learned in the work that they do.

The examples in this annual report come from just a few of the projects we've been working alongside.





ENCOURAGING AND ENABLING PEOPLE TO HAVE DIFFERENT CONVERSATIONS

Creating Conversations encouraged older people to get together and talk about the things that help them to feel better, and the things they would like to see in their communities. We visited churches, care homes and community groups to talk to older people and encourage them to think about their mental health and what helps them. We heard lots of valuable insights and noticed the same issues and suggestions coming up again and again. Older people and people who have lived with mental health problems found it was good to have the space to talk about this topic. Many people referred to having 'permission' to talk about mental wellbeing or to talk about growing old, as these are not conversations that usually happen. Once people had an initial conversation, they found it easier to continue the discussion. Individual people who took part have also found it easier to ask for support for themselves.

Flourishing Borders made it easier for older people living in Scottish Borders to talk about their mental wellbeing and what helped them to keep as well as possible.

- We held Happiness Habits cafés in partnership with local groups and let people try out activities that support good mental wellbeing.
- We encouraged people to talk about the things that help them keep well. At first people thought there was not much, but as people encouraged and promoted each other their lists grew.
- We produced tips from older people for other older people, showing ways to have good mental wellbeing and encouraging older people to have these conversations themselves.
- We also produced tips for workers, to enable them to hold their own Happiness Habits sessions with people they know.



"I'M FOLLOWING UP WITH THE LOVELY JAMES MCKILLOP WHO IS A VALUABLE ROLE MODEL AND SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE ON DEMENTIA AND GIVING UP DRIVING. THANK YOU."

"I ENJOYED LISTENING TO ALL THE SPEAKERS. THE PEOPLE FROM MECOPP WERE INSPIRING AND SO HELPFUL. GOOD SOLUTIONS THAT WILL ALSO BENEFIT PEOPLE WE ARE WORKING WITH."

"WE HAVE LEARNT A LOT ABOUT DIFFERENT WAYS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO OLDER PEOPLE. I NOW FEEL UPLIFTED, EMPOWERED AND ENCOURAGED."

This was the third year we held a series of [We're Here Too](#) events to highlight the voices and experiences of older people who live in care homes or need other types of support. This year the topics included support for older people in minority ethnic communities and their carers, people living with dementia contributing to formal inspections of services, building more links between care homes and the local communities and mixing with people across the generations. Over 30 organisations contributed as speakers or by bringing along information about what they do, over 130 people came along to an event and the report has reached over 3,000 people. People started having different conversations at the events and are continuing these by following up the contacts they have found.

ENCOURAGING AND ENABLING PEOPLE TO HAVE DIFFERENT CONVERSATIONS

Encouraging
Different
Conversations





CREATING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

For me, the highlight of my year was going to a care home to film Diane doing her belly dancing class. I knew it was going to be a fun day, but it was also so interesting to hear Diane talking about the importance of having self-confidence and keeping moving, even if it's only a little bit each day. It was great to see how engaged the residents were and seeing everyone equally enthusiastic about dancing to Shakira as they were some more old school tunes! Diane gave a lot of really valuable insight into how doing these small things for yourself can contribute a lot to your overall health and wellbeing and it was a brilliant day that I won't forget anytime soon.

Ciara Maguire, Project Worker

People shared good ideas and experiences on ways to make it easier for people who live in care homes to be involved in their communities at the [We're Here Too](#) events. We've now published the report from the events and people are telling us that they are following up similar ideas with other people in their area.

[Flourishing Borders](#) opened up opportunities for people to be part of their communities, as well as improving people's mental wellbeing – and the main message was that these go together.

- People have joined in with activities that were already going on in their community
- We supported spin-off activities when people wanted to continue doing something they enjoyed, including a ukulele groups, indoor curling, crafts groups, and people coming together for tea and a chat.

"REMEMBER THAT THOSE OF US WHO LIVE IN CARE HOMES ARE ABLE TO DO MORE THAN WE OFTEN HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO."

"MIKE THE MINISTER IS JUST GREAT. LOTS OF IDEAS TO FOLLOW UP WITH CHURCHES THAT OUR CLIENTS BELONG TO AND WE ARE GOING TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE FOOTBALL CLUB RIGHT AWAY!"

Inclusive Communities



CREATING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

In October and November we held Happiness Habits cafés down in Burnfoot Community Hub in Hawick. We were really pleased with how the sessions had gone as the people really engaged and talked openly about loneliness, mental health and well-being, but we weren't sure if they had made any changes to people's lives. Until we went to a follow up meeting and asked the local workers if they had seen any impact from the cafés.

That is when we found out that several people had really benefited from the cafés and that they had had a really positive impact on their lives. Liz was very quiet and isolated before attending, now she has joined the reminiscence group and the knitting group, she is beginning to get involved in the local community and is talking more to other people. Sonny didn't know that the Hub existed before, now he pops in for a coffee. John is a widower who was very isolated, who didn't like to talk about his wife or celebrate Christmas as it reminded him of his wife, but he chatted about his wife and how he could manage this Christmas. Lots of others who attended were also asking when the next session would be.

I was blown away by the impact that 2 two-hour sessions talking about mental health and wellbeing had had on one community. The people of Burnfoot are really keen to keep the cafés going so we are now helping them with a funding bid. We went back in February to talk to the people telling us what impact the café had on their lives and made a film to support their application. It is very exciting!





Food Buddies is a project in Scottish Borders that is creating opportunities for people who live with dementia and their families to have peer support around food. One of the difficulties many people have is finding a café or similar place where they can drop in for a coffee and know they will feel safe and welcome. We are talking to cafés and helping them become more dementia-friendly, and this led to regular days when people living with dementia get together for coffee and being with friends.

We met Tom and Sheena at one of these cafés. They told us that they really liked coming along because there were not many places where they felt welcome together as a couple – services kept assuming that Tom needed a place to be during the day to give Sheena a break.

"BASIC NURTURE AND CARE REDUCES BARRIERS AND HELPS YOU GROW AND IMPROVE."

"WE ALSO NEED HOPE - PLANT THE SEED AND GIVE A BIT OF HOPE."

"SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND RESOURCES WOULD MAKE THINGS A LOT BETTER."

PEOPLE HAVING CHOICES IN THEIR LIVES

Back in May during Mental Health Awareness Week I was asking the group about relationships and one of the couples who attended - Tom and Sheena - were talking about their relationship and how there was "nothing better than being with your best friend all of your married life". Since they retired they celebrate their wedding anniversary on the 15th of every month by cooking their favourite meal rather than waiting a whole year to celebrate! When I asked them if I could take a photo of the two of them they turned to each other and kissed! Sadly Tom passed away in the summer whilst visiting family and Sheena decided to stay with the family. That day has stuck with me as they were a wonderful example of a couple so very much still in love after many decades of marriage and truly inspiring people!

Christine Ryder, Project Worker

More Choice



BUILDING STRONG SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATIONS

My highlight of the year is the Angus McFlourish project. It has been great getting to know the group and planning activities they can do throughout the year. I enjoy the meetings so much that, when a meeting was suggested on my birthday, I thought that would be a nice way to spend the day and it was lovely when they all sang happy birthday to me. The project has been going well and it's really encouraging to see how enthusiastic the group is about it. It's also been amazing to see the positive response to the Surviving Christmas and New Year booklet, which was made with the suggestions from the group, and how happy the group are with the resource.

Alice Charlton, Project Worker

"WE'VE LEARNED THAT FOR ORGANISING ACTIVITIES, IT HELPS TO HAVE 1 OR 2 PEOPLE WHO ARE THERE EACH TIME, AS THAT GIVES CONSISTENCY TO WHAT THE GROUP DOES AND FOR PEOPLE ALWAYS SEEING SOMEONE THEY KNOW."

"WE KNOW IT IS WORKING WHEN PEOPLE WANT TO COME BACK."

We are helping [Angus Voice](#) plan for the future. The work on the social inclusion project gave the group more opportunities for members to take on new roles that will be useful for them and the group in the future. We've had planning sessions to look at how they will keep on the activities that were started through the Angus McFlourish project and how they will use these to have more ways of reaching people with mental health problems and having a stronger collective voice.



Strong Sustainable Organisations





We continued to support micro enterprises – helping smaller support providers and peer support groups to get going and helping people make what they do more sustainable.

- We are working alongside micro enterprises in rural areas
- We ran a workshop at the SCVO Gathering to show how micro enterprises can provide good social care and give people more choices

The We're Here Too events and other sessions gave people opportunities to learn from each other about how to make their group or team be more confident in what they do.

BUILDING STRONG SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATIONS

As the way we support older people across our community changes, staying focused on your outcomes and maintaining belief in what we are doing can become harder as we develop, grow and change those supports. As we follow the road of integration it is easy to get lost or question whether what you are doing is beneficial and worthy or a whim based upon the perceptions you have of how a service should be developed. This is where Outside the Box can and does help.

When you listen to others at We're Here Too events you find out that you are not alone in questioning your practice and looking for more ideas. Meeting and joining in with a Belly Dancer who gets people living in care homes moving about and laughing shows that even the zaniest ideas can find merit and fit with national strategic and good practice objectives. Being able to access the reports on the website adds credence to what we do. It all helps.

Alan Stevenson, Community Link Worker East Renfrewshire Community Health & Care Partnership, Outside the Box board member

"IT'S A NEW WAY OR MAYBE AN OLD WAY TO DO THINGS AND IT OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE, PLACES AND ORGANISATIONS. OF COURSE THERE ARE CHALLENGES TOO, BUT WE DO NEED TO THINK ABOUT WHAT WORKS FOR PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES IN THE LONG TERM."

Strong Sustainable Organisations



DEVELOPING OUTSIDE THE BOX - THE TEAM

There were big developments at Outside the Box this year.

- We changed the roles of some posts and appointed 4 new people – Alice, Christine, Ciara and Ruth. They bring a range of skills and experience that is benefitting the projects we work alongside and the way the organisation works.
- We launched our new website. This makes it easier for people to find the resources we have published over the years and link to the projects we work with today.
- We are making more use of social media, including frequent blogs and Facebook pages for the organisation and for some projects. This makes it easier for people to hear about what we are doing. It also lets us support our partners more and share good things that other people are doing.

2016 was a big year for Outside the Box. The staff team more than doubled (followed by a move of office to accommodate the new influx). This growth has of course meant that we have been able to be more ambitious with our projects and reach out to more people. It has also meant that more time has been able to be focused on our online presence. It has been encouraging to see our Twitter following also more than doubling in less than a year and to see our new website up and running and working well. A huge part of our work is starting conversations about the areas that we work on and the topics that we value. We know that our ability to engage with others online is a key part of this and we're happy to have been able to put time in to this this year.

Ruth Cape, Project Worker



DEVELOPING OUTSIDE THE BOX - PARTNERSHIPS

Each year we have new partnerships. Here are some examples.

We spent almost 2 years talking to people about the possibility of work to explore the ways communities can work well for older people. This included building on our links with the National Development Team for inclusion and getting to know Volunteering Matters Cymru as well as building on links with people living and working in rural areas across Scotland. We heard in December that Big Lottery had awarded us a 5-year grant for Rural Wisdom: Outside the Box leads on development work in Scotland, Volunteering Matters Cymru leads on development work in Wales, NDTi leads on the evaluation and shared learning strand, and we will all be sharing what we learn and keeping in touch with other teams and projects across the UK. You can find out more at www.rurualwisdom.org

We developed our partnerships with people who live with dementia. The We're Here Too events included 3 people who are Inspection Volunteers with the Care Inspectorate. They explained how their experience helped bring in the experiences of people who live with dementia when there was an inspection of the service they used. Agnes Houston has encouraged our Food Buddies project and we are now working with Agnes to develop a peer support resource where people living with dementia explain how their taste and smell senses are changing and share ways they are learning to cope with this.

This year we have been working on our Families Project. We have had lots of interesting meetings with groups such as Stepping Stones, Healthy Valleys and LGBT Health for support to Rainbow Families. From these meetings, we've got valuable insights that have enabled us to put together a series of hints & tips for families around mental health. We also set up 'Homework and Supper Clubs' in the Borders, which have been a great opportunity to build support for families and bring people together in a fun and productive space. We are excited to have been granted funding which means we can continue to develop these projects and support even more families.

DEVELOPING OUTSIDE THE BOX - INCOME

We received grants and contract income from a range of sources. We want to thank all the organisations and people who supported our work.

Angus Council and NHS Tayside

Bank of Scotland Foundation

Big Lottery Fund

Falkirk Integrated Care Fund

Foundation Scotland

Garfield Weston Foundation

Glasgow Community Justice Authority

Hayward Sanderson Trust

Life Changes Trust

Robertson Trust

Scottish Government Equalities programme

Scottish Government Self-directed support capacity building grants programme

Voluntary Action Fund

Other voluntary organisations and partners

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