

# Annual Report 2018

A plain text version of  
this report is available:  
[rhiannon@otbds.org](mailto:rhiannon@otbds.org)



outside the box



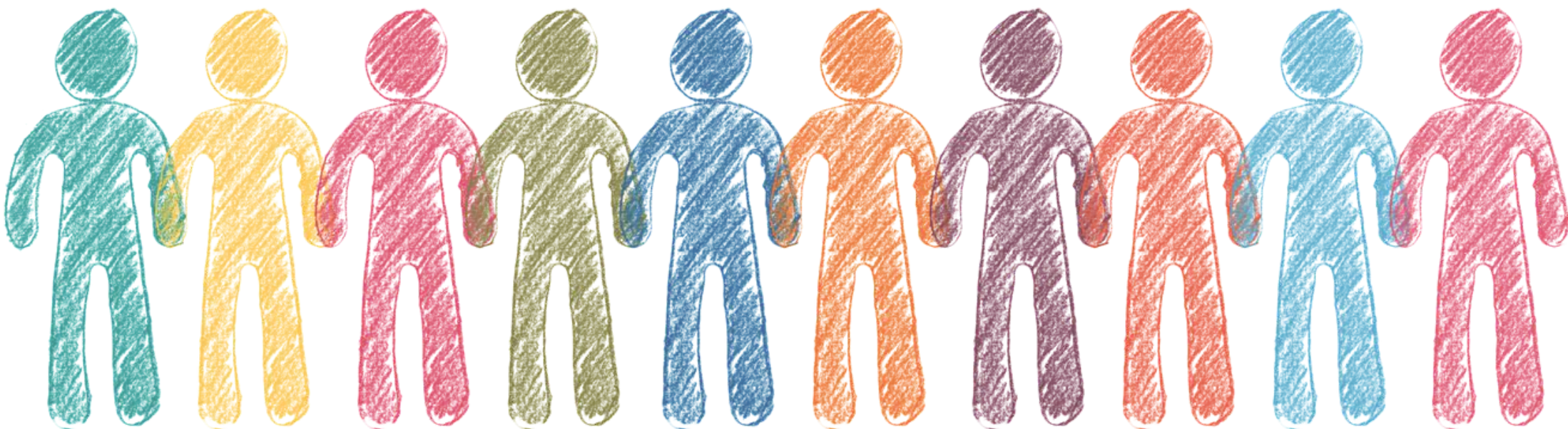
building strong  
inclusive communities

# OUTSIDE THE BOX SUPPORTS PEOPLE TO MAKE THEIR COMMUNITIES WORK BETTER.



This is our annual report for 2018. We were 14 this year, so we planned to do the things that most teenagers do – make new friends, go to new places, come across new ideas, be passionate, change our minds, eat too much chocolate and stay up late talking about how to change the world.

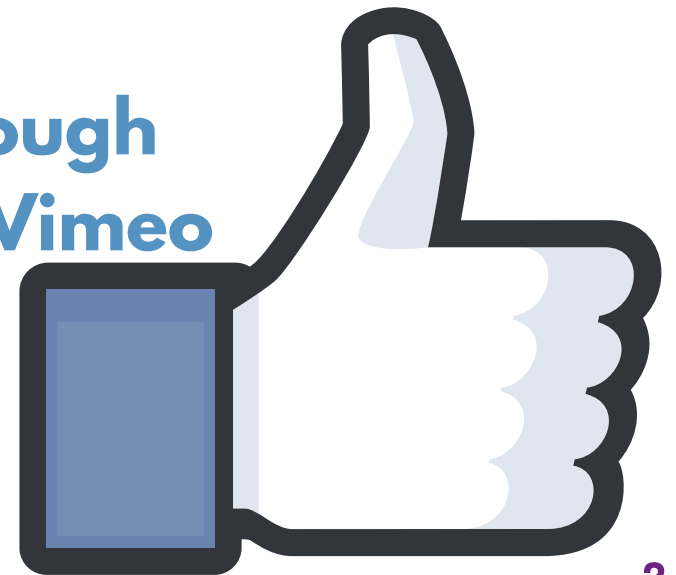
We hoped to avoid getting spots and breaking our hearts. But we wanted to keep on remembering how that feels and remember how the other big changes in people's lives – both difficult and good – feel for people living through them.



We had another growth spurt in 2018 and now have 17 staff members working right across Scotland. 2

# OVER THE PAST YEAR...

- ▶ We worked with over **36** groups
- ▶ We worked alongside around **23000** people
- ▶ The activities and services they developed went on to support around **7000** people
- ▶ We won **1** ICIPS Award for Innovation(!)
- ▶ We produced **22** publications
- ▶ We reached more people this year through social media using Twitter, Facebook, Vimeo and Instagram - bringing the impacts and ideas from our work to a much wider range of people.



# WHAT WE BELIEVE



Scotland has too many people who are marginalised and disadvantaged because of their age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, disability, or because they live in poverty or in an area with too few resources. As a consequence, some individuals do not have the same opportunities and choices that other people enjoy, and the community as a whole is poorer for the loss of those potential contributions. **People who are marginalised are part of the solution to these problems.**



Everyone can contribute to their community and to society if they have the right encouragement and support. One of the contributions we all make is our presence. **Everyone's experience and ideas matter.**

Action to make real, sustainable change happen starts from where people are, and works with their strengths, enthusiasms and priorities.

There are benefits both to individual people, and to our communities, when all people are welcomed and included. The labels society puts on people do not change the contributions we are all able to make.

Everyone has the right to have access to services and other supports that are relevant to their circumstances and choices, delivered to high standards, and which treat them and others with respect. **Organisations are better at what they do when they listen to, act on and learn from the views and experiences of the people whom they are there to serve, and when they work in partnership with their communities.**

We can all get ideas from what other people have done and what has been tried in other places. We can also share what we have learned with other people. **Society is stronger when we celebrate each other's contributions and value our own.**

# WHAT WE'RE ALL ABOUT

Every project is different because what we do is based on the issues that group of people are tackling and how they want to work – going at their pace and building on their skills and strengths. But there are some themes that run through all the work we do:

having different conversations

creating inclusive communities

people having more choices in their lives

building strong, sustainable organisations

The following pages contain examples of just some of the things we have been doing over the past year or so and what we'll be doing over the next year or so. You'll find more about what we do on our website: [www.otbds.org](http://www.otbds.org)

We want to thank all the people we are working with and all the organisations and trusts that fund our work.

# 1. 'SIMPLE SOLUTIONS ARE OFTEN THE MOST EFFECTIVE'

## WHO IS IT FOR?

We are currently working with a group of people who have learning difficulties in Falkirk. The project is aimed at **reducing social isolation and loneliness through making friends and trying new activities.**



## WHAT DID WE DO?

We have been working with people in the group to facilitate sessions where they get to know each other and make friends through different activities.

So far we have tried a huge range of activities such as:

- Belly dancing**
- Day trips**
- Going on trishaws**
- Karaoke**
- To a café for lunch**

## WHAT HAS CHANGED?

The group are all now good friends. It has been great to see people come out of their shells and really grow in confidence.

Some members of the group who didn't speak before are now happy to chat. As we have been able to go to new places with the group it has meant that members of the group feel happy to try new things when they aren't at the Friends Group.

Two members of the group have even started a relationship and will be getting married this year!

## WHAT WE LEARNED

We learned that simple solutions are often the most effective. Having things to look forward to and friends to chat with can make a huge difference to people's lives and reduce feelings of social isolation and loneliness.



# 2. 'BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY'

## WHO IS IT FOR?

Women and their families who came to Scotland through the Scottish Government's Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme.

## WHAT ARE WE DOING?

We started with a pilot project of a few months, making space for people to get to know us and each other by listening to what life is like for them - before and now as 'New Scots'.

We facilitated conversations about what helps these women, their families and other people from Syria settle in their new neighbourhoods, build social connections and become active citizens in their communities.

### These are some of the activities we organised:

- A herb planting session which led to their plans for a community garden space.
- A football training session, which led to conversations about gaps in culturally sensitive places for activities such as swimming.
- Going to meet older people who live at a local care home so the women could find out about the lives of older women in Scotland, which has led to follow up visits and friendships.
- A storytelling event and coffee morning for local families



New Scots connecting with communities  
*"Where we are now is what matters most"*



The Moments of Freedom group herb planting at the Clydebank Centre 81 community garden 6



## WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

- More activities to help the women gain confidence and seek out opportunities for themselves and their families, as individuals and peer support for each other
- Building relationships with people in the local community
- Making links with other women who are New Scots living in other parts of Greater Glasgow

## WHAT IS THE IMPACT SO FAR AND WHAT ARE WE LEARNING?

- The women have more support from each other and like the new friendships they are making.
- The Council is learning how to adapt their services to make them work for these women and their families, and for other people who need more cultural diversity.
- We are learning more about peer support, including across communities and generations.



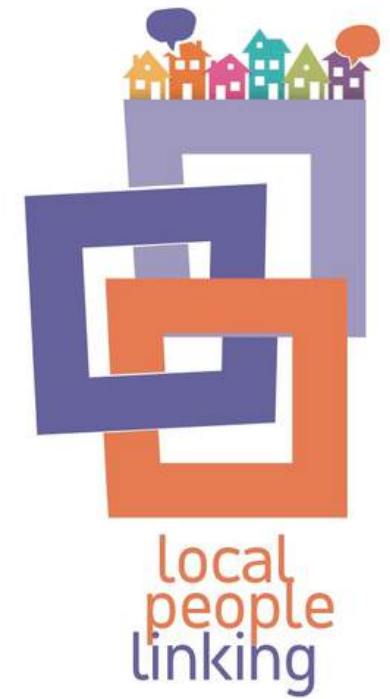
## WHAT'S NEXT?

We're continuing to work with the women and building up more contacts with other women across Greater Glasgow. We're supporting the women to contribute to a local community newspaper

We're sharing what we are doing and learning with other people across Scotland and feeding in to national policies around the New Scots Strategy.

# 3. 'OLDER PEOPLE'S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS'

Local People Linking has been working across East Renfrewshire helping older people to keep participating in the local activities and supports they enjoy. We have linked with older people's groups across East Renfrewshire delivering our 'Learning about Rights' sessions -creating spaces where older people can talk about their rights, based on their own knowledge and experiences of their local communities.



Voting is an important right, so we use it into our 'Learning About Rights' sessions



**“A lot of older people have forgotten about their rights. Maybe by challenging some stereotypes people will realise we’re not all the same and don’t all like the same things!”**

Each group report on their learning and what’s happening for them by creating ‘live’ Rights Charter. These are shared across the area to help groups link up and raise awareness of how older people can be part of shaping the good things happening in their local communities.

The learning from the project so far has made us realise that we need to think of ways we recognise human rights based approaches in all our work, including with young people. In response, we are delivering joint training with our board and across the team to create our own organisational Rights Charter to share how we approach rights for all groups across the work we do.

**We have produced two publications:**



# 4. 'SUPPORTING A GROUP TO TAKE CONTROL'



Happiness Habits is working with people in the rural parts of the Scottish Borders to

- build links between people,
- increase social inclusion.

In April 2017, we went along to chat about Food Buddies to a pensioners group who met on a regular basis in Caddonfoot, a little village outside Galashiels.

It became obvious during our chat that the group did not feel that they had any issues with food, but what they really wanted was a new activity to bring the community together.

We suggested a taster afternoon to try different activities. Fifteen people came along and tried out a variety of things before deciding on a favourite.

New Age Kurling was the stand out winner - everyone loved it!





"These two hours are the best of the week"

"Those who aren't so fit can still take part"

"It gets me out of the house and I now know most of the people."

We supported the group to set up their own Kurling group exactly how they wanted it.

Gradually over several months the group began to take more control. It was amazing to see how far they had come in a few short months, leading us to take a step back.

What we learnt from Caddonfoot is that it is really important that the group have

ownership and to support them in whatever role they take within the group at their own pace - it is their group, not ours! We still pop in to see them and they know where we are if they need any help.

The group are really keen to do some intergenerational kurling with the local primary school so watch this space as we work with both the primary school and the kurling group to make it happen!

# 5. 'SYLVIA'S STORY'

Sylvia wants a fresh start for her and her grandson and will use her micro budget to make a difference to both of their lives to help them move forward, together.

Sylvia is in her fifties with two grown up daughters and several grandchildren. She has convictions for breach of the peace committed while under the influence of alcohol.

Her daughter is about to enter a residential unit to deal with her heroin addiction. As a result, Sylvia's thirteen-year-old grandson will be coming to live with her shortly. He has experienced bullying at school because of his mother's addiction. However, is doing well.

Sylvia is hoping to move into a two-bedroom house with her grandson. Sylvia will use her micro budget to buy new bedroom furniture for his room.

'I don't want to make the same mistakes that I made with my daughters. I'm determined to provide a stable, secure home life for my grandson.'

Moving   
Forward



**Sylvia** is just one of the many people who benefitted from the Moving Forward project.

Together with Turning Point Scotland, Glasgow Community Justice Authority and other partners in Glasgow, we set out to investigate and illustrate how small sums of money might increase individuals choice and control over their lives.

We worked with individuals to identify what things would make a difference in their lives.

Some of the things the micro budget was spent on include:



**A mobile phone to keep in contact with family elsewhere in Scotland**



**Driving lessons to improve employability**



**Attending cookery classes for wellbeing and new skills**



We work with people who are changing things, or want to improve things, in their lives and their communities. Some of the people we work with are living with range of complex issues and difficult experiences that affect their everyday live. They may also be experiencing, or have experienced poverty and deprivation, homelessness and insecure housing, community justice and violence and trauma.

We help them to share their experiences, skills, knowledge and ideas in ways that help themselves and other people in similar situations.

# 6. 'BUSTING MYTHS & TACKLING DISCRIMINATION'



"I knew as soon as I told my boss I was pregnant, I would be viewed as having very little use and she did not disappoint. I was isolated from the rest of the team and told I was a 'burden.'"

"What really upset me was when I came back I'd had important responsibilities taken from me and given to others. I felt like I was being punished and no longer valued."

"Honestly you feel so guilty about coming back to work anyway and having to leave your baby with someone else is hard enough- the last thing you need is to be treated like crap on top of it all at work"

"I was forced to come back on a full-time basis or I was told I could lose my job."

Whether these testimonies from women are a result of employers being misinformed, misguided or they simply do not understand what constitutes good practice; the impact for women and their families is unacceptable and can be hugely detrimental, which is why we create our '**Mums Returning To Work Guide**'.



## WHAT DID WE DO?

We met with groups of women who are returning to work after having children. They described how most local peer support groups and networks for Mums with babies and young children, happen during the day and this source of peer support stops for most women once they go back to work.

From speaking to Mums and employers, we have developed two resources 

**1. A discussion paper** that helps highlight the good practice of employers in Scotland as well as looking for solutions to support Mums to have equal access to work.

**2. A Guide For Working Mums** which outlines some of the issues women are facing in their return to work, gives information about support networks and shares experiences. It aims to give some emotional and practical reassurance to other women in these circumstances

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

We're taking this theme forward with two different projects:

- **We're developing an online training resource.** We aim to produce online training and tailored supported to small businesses wanting to become a recognised Mums Returning to Work friendly employer.
- **We are carrying out an online survey into mental health supports available to mums.** The aim is to find out what works and what doesn't, and to increase awareness of supports available to women across Scotland.



# 7. 'WE'RE ALL PART OF ONE COMMUNITY'



*“Intergen is about getting older people to connect with younger people, cos we don’t think that happens enough and because people treat it like there’s two parts of the community, but that’s not what it is. We’re all part of one community and we want people to feel like that” Gregor, young person, Edzell*

Intergen is a project that Rural Wisdom has been working on alongside Edzell School, Edzell Bowling Club and community members. It began after a number of people expressed an interest more inter-generational activities.

We got in touch with the local school and local organisations like the Cottage who run a weekly lunch-club in the village.

We learned that most of the students taking part in the project knew very few people from the older generation beyond their grandparents: **our hope was to change this.**



## Edzell project forges links with different generations

by Janet Thomson  February 2 2019, 8:41am

One of the bowling sessions at Edzell

We chose to make a film to allow the young people to learn some practical skills, and allow us to capture and share the conversations.

We began by running sessions in the classroom, inviting people from the older generation to come and visit the class. The focus was on letting the school children and the older people get to know each other by asking questions and exploring themes together.

**“I was amazed by how quickly the young people formed a relationship - by the second session they welcomed me in.”**

The children selected the bowling club as the filming location. Members were very accommodating and helped to set up two taster sessions.

Bowling was a great opportunity to break the ice, have fun and learn from each other.

We held a film screening to celebrate and discuss what we had done and reconnect with the importance of having people of different generations in our lives.



**“For me it was thought-provoking, I’ve thought about it quite a lot since. Actually when I’m in Edzell now, and I’ve seen 4 or 5 of them since... they all say hello and stop for a chat.”**



Thank  
you!

From all of us at the ever-expanding team at Outside The Box, we want to thank everyone we are working with and all the organisations and trusts that fund our work, including (but not limited to):

- Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership
- Austin Hope Pilkington Trust
- Big Lottery Fund Accelerating Ideas Programme
- Corra Foundation
- East Renfrewshire Good Causes
- Falkirk Integrated Joint Fund
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Glasgow City Council
- Hayward Sanderson Trust
- Henry Duncan Fund
- Life Changes Trust
- People's Health Trust
- Robertson Trust
- Scottish Government Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention Fund
- Scottish Government Promoting Equalities and Cohesion Fund
- Scottish Government Self-Directed Support Innovations Fund
- Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations
- Voluntary Action Fund
- Other voluntary organisations



Talk to us  
[www.otbds.org](http://www.otbds.org)  
[admin@otbds.org](mailto:admin@otbds.org)  
0141 419 0451

