



OUTSIDE THE BOX ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

THIS REPORT
SHOWS SOME OF
THE DEVELOPMENTS
THAT OUTSIDE THE
BOX SUPPORTED
OVER THE PAST YEAR
AND THE IMPACTS
WE ARE MAKING.

YOU CAN FIND OUT
MORE ABOUT OUR
WORK BY VISITING OUR
WEBSITE
WWW.OTBDS.ORG
OR FOLLOWING US ON



We work alongside people
to create strong inclusive
communities.

OUTSIDE THE BOX IS A
CHARITY AND SOCIAL
ENTERPRISE. WE BEGAN
IN 2004 AND HAVE
GROWN TO SUPPORT
PEOPLE ACROSS
SCOTLAND AND HAVE
PARTNERSHIP WORK IN
WALES.

Outside the Box helps
people and community
groups who face challenges
create changes that benefit
themselves and other people:

- We provide community development support.
- We host new ventures to get them underway, until local people are ready to take them on for the future.
- We develop and publish tips and resources that share practical help based on what people find works, to give many more people choices and make life easier.

THIS IS WHAT WE DID IN 2019-20

We worked alongside 110 community groups.

We enabled 2090 people to be more involved in their communities. They benefited too, gaining more confidence and skills and more social connections.

The activities we developed with them benefited over 10,000 people.

We shared what we are doing and learning through over 20 events and 17 publications. Other people shared these through their networks too and the benefits reached another 10,000 people.

We contributed to national policy conversations and responded to over 20 national and local consultations, to feed in the issues raised by the people we work alongside, as well as encouraging people in communities to take part.

The range and number of people and communities we are supporting increased. We've seen new projects get going that support people who are socially isolated, families with younger children, people living with dementia and other older people, and people in touch with the criminal justice system.

THIS ANNUAL REPORT

The report shows some of the highlights from the year.

- Ways we work with communities and the impacts for people living there
- How we give people and communities a voice and contribute to wider policy developments
- How we develop the organisation and the way we work, to improve what we do and reach more people.

THIS HAS BEEN ANOTHER INCREDIBLE YEAR FOR OUTSIDE THE BOX. THE HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS REPORT DEMONSTRATE HOW WE'VE GROWN AND THE BREADTH AND DEPTH OF WHAT THE CHARITY DOES. AS CHAIR, I FEEL INCREDIBLY PROUD OF THE HARD WORK THAT THE STAFF AND OUR PARTNERS ARE DOING TO MAKE LIFE BETTER FOR PEOPLE ACROSS SCOTLAND.

Whether Outside the Box is working with refugee women in Clydebank, or people with dementia in rural Perthshire, or supporting employers to make their workplaces more mum-friendly, there are common threads that run through all that we do.

We start from the position that people who face disadvantage are part of the solution to those problems. We bring people together, listen to what matters to them and support them to find innovative ways to improve things for themselves and their communities. We learn from what we do and share what we learn.

I am struck by the commitment that every single member of staff shows to these values. I am also impressed by their abilities to combine a solid understanding of human rights based approaches to community development with the importance of tea and biscuits. It's that humanity that shines through in each of the projects in this report.

It's been particularly impressive to see how the team have transformed the way they worked with communities in the face of the pandemic and lockdown. They've done what they always do: applied imagination and innovation to support groups in finding solutions that work for them.



Rosie McIntosh, Chair

SISTERHOOD
(NOUN) – A
STRONG FEELING
OF FRIENDSHIP
AND SUPPORT
AMONG WOMEN
WHO ARE
INVOLVED
IN ACTION
TO IMPROVE
WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

Moments of Freedom is a project led by Syrian refugee New Scot women in Clydebank.

We have provided development support to the women from the initial idea and getting the group going in 2017.

After identifying gaps in community provisions, the group has organised community meet-ups, activities and gatherings.

Moments of Freedom was the runner-up in the Community Development category of the Ethnic Minority Impact Awards. The awards ceremony was organised by CEMVO Scotland to recognise individuals or organisations that have contributed to Scottish society or made a difference to their community locally or nationally.

This is a partnership between the women, Outside the Box and the Resettlement Team at West Dunbartonshire Council.

MOMENTS OF FREEDOM

In June of this year we supported the Moments of Freedom group (of New Scots women in Clydebank) to hold a 'Women's Wellbeing Event' in Clydebank as part of Refugee Festival Scotland. They received funding from the Scottish Refugee Council which enabled them to book a bigger venue and connect with more women from Clydebank and across Scotland.

The event itself was fantastic, with belly-dancing, yoga and relaxation, lots of good conversation and plenty of laughter.

It stands out as a highlight because of what the event symbolised - women celebrating their strength and resilience, together working towards a brighter future for themselves and others around them.

It's a privilege to work alongside, and learn from the women in the group.

Kate Robertson, Community Development Advisor



GETTING OUTDOORS WITH PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

// A GENTLE AND RELAXING WAY TO GIVE OUR EXPERIENCES WITH THE PROJECT. //

// THE DAY HAS BEEN USEFUL FOR US IN LOOKING AHEAD AND DESCRIBING WHAT MEMBERS ACHIEVE HERE. //

I'm so proud to be part of evaluation work checking out a range of projects working with people with dementia and family carers encouraging and supporting people to enjoy and spend time outdoors more. We were appointed evaluators of Life Changes Trust 'Get Outdoors' programme which funds six different projects to encourage people living with dementia and their carers to benefit from being outside.

It's a privilege to visit and participate in these projects and talk to so many people about the impact it has on their lives.

So often we can see the joy and the fun that people have from these projects, and this includes people living with dementia, their carers, local volunteers and staff.

Hearing and sharing stories from people living with dementia and their carers about the impact being outside has on their lives and on their mental health and wellbeing. By sharing the stories we will be able to show the difference it makes to people and will offer ideas and best ways of working for people working with people with dementia.

Louise Willson, Community Development Advisor



GIVING PEOPLE CHOICES

In August, the Support Choices team co-hosted an event in Aberfeldy Town Hall with the aim of facilitating networking and information-gathering between community members, projects and services in the local area. We wanted to provide an opportunity for people to come together in collaboration to promote a future where a choice of quality care is available.

The event was supported by the Rural Wisdom project and The Care and Wellbeing Cooperative and featured a wide range of stalls by statutory, voluntary and private sector organisations and community groups all keen to provide individuals in the area with information on the services available to them.

Providing lunch meant people got a chance to chat more informally and there were demonstrations of chair-based exercise and healing hands with some people receiving complimentary Shiatsu massage.

Nicky, Ruth, Heather and Chris
(Support Choices team)

MAKING WORKPLACES MORE 'MUM-FRIENDLY'

We launched our Mums Returning to Work website and training to encourage employers to build their skills and confidence around women returning to work. This complements our resources to give new mums and their families more choices around work.

We met inspiring women with stories which highlighted how important this work is.

We worked with Third Sector Lab to develop animated stories that illustrate real life situations that mums face, and we launched: www.mumsreturningtowork.org

We piloted the training with two fantastic nurseries who became the first workplaces in Scotland to receive our 'Mum Friendly Workplace' tick.

We got media coverage in the Evening Times, Daily Record, Glasgow Live and CommonSpace, which helped us reach many more women and employers.

We're now working on developing our training tools, guides and training even further.



A 'PERMISSION TO DREAM' COME TRUE

" I WOULD NEVER HAVE HAD THE CONFIDENCE TO DO THIS IF IT WAS NOT FOR THE SUPPORT I FEEL FROM THE GROUP. "

" THE GROUP MAKES ME FEEL UPLIFTED AND LIKE I AM A PART OF SOMETHING. I'VE LOST THAT FEELING SINCE I STOPPED WORKING A FEW YEARS AGO AND NOW I'VE GOT IT BACK. "

" THIS GROUP IS LIKE A GIFT FROM THE UNIVERSE. IT'S QUIET, NICE, YOU CAN BE RELAXED. "

We have been working with two groups of people with mental health challenges on building peer support to allow them to make their lives better.

We meet every week for a chat and some cake and sometimes we put on events to which the wider community can come. We had a swish party - where people brought clothes and accessories they no longer wanted and exchanged them with others, and a craft swap - where people swapped craft resources and materials.

We also do some relaxation, pampering and craft activities - whatever the group decides.

But everyone agrees that it's the spending time together talking that's the most important part. The support from the group has given people increased confidence and new ways of coping with challenges. The weekly sessions have offered the participants a chance to relax, share and feel part of something. It's been great to hear some lovely feedback.

Now the women are taking on more themselves and have helped us make plans to expand the approach to reach more people.

Ania Sandland, Community Development Advisor

CONNECTION WITH A FAMILY QUIZ

There have been so many exciting developments with this new project working in the Eaglesham area of East Renfrewshire. Our role is to help groups and people connect up and support them to start new activities.

People wanted to connect people more with their community, help families work together to find out more about their community, including local businesses, and gather people's ideas on what they would like to have happen in the area that doesn't already exist. That all came together when Eaglesham History Society and Community Connections came up with "How Well Do You Know Your Area?" Family Quiz, with prizes!

We adapted questions from Eaglesham's Heritage Trail and made up some of our own. We distributed the quizzes through Eaglesham Primary School, St. Joseph's Primary, Eaglesham library, Eaglesham

Facebook pages and anywhere else on and offline we could think of. They were also the main focus of the first Community Connections 'Pop up' Village Gathering and were handed to people who engaged with us during that. The quiz became a talking point for the whole village!

We found out that people would like self-defence classes for women, a gaming club for kids, a community choir, a swimming pool, more plants, a family scavenger hunt, a community garden, beehives for locally produced honey, a Mens' Shed (open to women too!), DIY for women, arts and crafts for adults, amongst other things. They said they felt Eaglesham and Waterfoot are great villages to live in as you can go for so many lovely family walks in nature and there are so many things to see and do.

As well as gathering all this invaluable information from people to explore, feedback from the quiz was tremendous. Everyone said they really enjoyed the family experience of walking around the village looking for clues. They said they'd lived in the village for years and didn't know a lot of the history that they discovered from the quiz.

Liz Hight, Community Worker

"GREAT IDEA AND FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY! WE LOVED SPENDING THE TIME TOGETHER REALLY EXPLORING THE VILLAGE WE LIVE IN TOGETHER."





GARDEN BUDDIES

This year has seen the development of an exciting new gardening project in the Scottish Borders. Our role was helping people find the right partners, making this work for everyone and supporting the sessions. It followed on from a pilot project last year with Peebles CAN community garden and Green Gardens Day Centre. We introduced pupils from Peebles schools to older people using the Day Centre.

In the garden the teenagers got on with some real work every week, with a focus on making areas of the garden dementia friendly, while people living with dementia got busy growing and tending plants - the herbs were a great success. On the colder and wetter days we had activities everyone could do such as playing games and trying out percussion instruments, which are good to keep your hands and wrists active and strong. But the best part of every day was everyone having tea and a chat and becoming friends.

We got some ideas on a learning exchange visit to a dementia-friendly garden in Dumbarton. We got help from other people, such as power-hosing and weeding the slabbed area to make it easier to walk on, and we had some raised beds built by Community Justice workers.

We are garden buddies as everyone helps and encourages each other. Our young helpers were very proud to receive Garden Buddies certificates as a record of their achievements before the end of term. People from the project made connections with other community gardens and some folk now go along there. Later in the year, we got together to enjoy cooking and eating some of our harvested produce.

Since the initial project the Garden Buddies has spread to other day centres, supporting Occupational Therapists to provide activities that increase people's social connections and give more opportunities for people to get advice that helps them in day-to-day life. Gardening is now one of many activities enjoyed by several groups, and we are using their experiences and suggestions to write tips to encourage more people affected by dementia and other older people to keep on enjoying gardening.

Ruth Noble, Development Worker

// I LOVE IT WHEN THE YOUNG ONES COME TO THE CENTRE – IT MAKES ME FEEL YOUNG AGAIN! //

One of our older people

// THE BEST BIT IS WHEN WE PLAY GAMES AND HAVE A CUP OF TEA – AND BISCUITS! //

A younger participant



GIVING PEOPLE A VOICE

ONE OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS HAS BEEN GIVING LOTS OF PEOPLE IN COMMUNITIES THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE POLICIES AND DECISIONS THAT AFFECT EVERYBODY. WE HEAR FROM PEOPLE ABOUT THE ISSUES THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO THEM - WHAT WORKS, WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO CHANGE AND THE WAYS THEY SEE TO MAKE THINGS WORK BETTER FOR PEOPLE LIKE THEM AND FOR EVERYONE ELSE.

These are not traditional ways of consulting with people. It is listening to what people say over tea and cake at singing groups and lunch clubs, chatting to children and young people at activities that bring people in their village together, and going out with the Library Bus to find out what matters to people living in more isolated areas.

Sometimes we find out what people think about a particular topic. We tell people when there is a consultation from the Scottish Government or one of the Committees at the Parliament: they can feed into a bigger response through us, or make their own response, or be part of a local response from their community.

We help people find out about the formal consultation meetings and get along to them.

We're proud of working alongside thousands of people to contribute to the wellbeing of people now and in the future, and of showing that there are different ways for people to have a voice.

Anne Connor, Chief Executive



“ IT’S GOOD TO SEE OUR EXPERIENCES BECOMING PART OF AN OFFICIAL POLICY. IT FEELS LIKE WE MATTER AND SOMEONE IS LISTENING. ”

CONTRIBUTING TO NATIONAL POLICIES

This year we saw transport and housing policies reflect issues that people we know had raised. In April the Scottish Government published A Fairer Scotland for Older People, which is the framework for all policies across all parts of government. The Framework includes points we had raised about the contributions older people make in our communities and our human rights as well as the types of services and supports we want. It even included quotes from people who are part of the Rural Wisdom project.

LOCAL PEOPLE LINKING

Our Local People Linking resources have more tips on how people can contribute their views and raise issues that concern them, starting with the experience of people in local communities.

These are some of the ways people have used the resources:

- People in a Minority Ethnic Elders’ Group explained to the Council how changes to public transport had made it more difficult for them to get out and see family and friends, be active members of their faith groups and keep up the activities that keep them well.
- Care workers and older people talked about the ways people want to be part of their local communities and how the attitudes of older people can make older people feel stigmatised.
- People who live with poor mental health and wellbeing used human rights to help them talk about what is important for them, which they then contributed to plans for that area’s mental health services.
- People in many locations have used the tips to plan contacting their Councillors and MSPs. For some people, the issue was taken up and their situation improved.



RURAL WISDOM

Rural Wisdom works with older people in rural communities. We are now working in 9 communities across Scotland and Wales, plus meeting and learning from people in many other rural areas.

One of the main aims of this 5-year project is to give older people a stronger voice in their communities and on the issues that affect them. We find and share practical examples, so local people can learn more and use this to show that what they want is possible.

- People in Scotland are looking for more examples of transport services that work well for rural areas, to show policy makers what is possible. People from a great transport network in Pembrokeshire came to Scotland and shared what they have been doing with people in Borders, Perth and Kinross and Angus, and had a meeting at the Scottish Parliament.
- Community-led services are looking for easier ways to show the impact they make. We connected people in Wales and Scotland who are working on simple, effective evaluation tools that are designed for these situations, and now some people are trying it out.
- People want social care services that are local and flexible. People in Wales had heard of innovative approaches in Scotland, so we organised ways for them to learn more about what has been done and what people have learned, so whatever happens in Wales benefits from the Scottish experience.

// OFTEN WE ARE SAYING TO PEOPLE WORKING ON RURAL POLICIES 'REMEMBER OLDER PEOPLE'; AND SAYING TO PEOPLE WORKING ON POLICIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE 'THINK RURAL' //



OUR NEW OFFICE IN DUNKELD

We moved into our new office in Dunkeld, which is now the base of our northern work and for the Support Choices project. We had been working in this northern part of Perth and Kinross for several years, and wanted a base here.

Being part of a new co-working space has led to us working alongside local charities, businesses and community activities across Highland Perthshire. It also makes it easier for the people who are part of work we are doing in Highland Perthshire and in Angus, Moray and Aberdeenshire to get together.

DEVELOPING OUR SKILLS

Early in the year we spent a day learning how to make animated videos using Biteable software. I am really not what you would describe as a creative person so this terrified me, but I could see the potential!

After the training and in the comfort zone of my own desk at home I started to play around with it and come up with ideas as to how I could use it to showcase the work I was doing in Borders. One of the first videos I made was for a Lets Talk Transport event. Feeling very proud of my 52 seconds video I showed my boys.

They were astounded "Mum you couldn't have made that, it's really good" and "Can you teach me so I can use it for school projects" was the response. Now, many videos later, I am much more confident and even showing others how to use it to make videos including a group of young people down in Newtown St Boswells who want to use it to make a digital newsletter! It has made writing up events, showing the progress of projects much easier and more visual which people are liking. I did also show Aidan my youngest son how to make a video, which he did as his application to become a Penicuik Learner, which was successful and got him lots of brownie points at school for his creativity!

Christine Ryder, Community Worker

// MUM YOU COULDN'T HAVE MADE THAT, IT'S REALLY GOOD! CAN YOU TEACH ME SO I CAN USE IT FOR SCHOOL PROJECTS? //





THANK YOU

THE WORK THAT OUTSIDE THE BOX DOES TO BUILD STRONG INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES RIGHT ACROSS SCOTLAND WOULDN'T BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF SO MANY OTHERS.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS, TO ALL THE THIRD SECTOR AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS THAT WE WORK WITH, AND TO ALL THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHO SHARED THEIR VIEWS AND TIME.

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