

OUTSIDE THE BOX SOUTH EAST NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the first edition of our Outside the Box South East Newsletter. We have included a little snippet of some of the work we are working on at the moment.

FOOD BUDDIES

Food Buddies has been working over the last 4 years in the Scottish Borders, to support people living with dementia to continue to eat well. In that time we have shared many peer support resources developed through talking to people with lived experience of dementia. We have spoken to café staff, delivered training, held international food tastings, barbecues and chatted with people about practical ways of eating well. You have told us how helpful these ideas have been and told people in many other places about Food Buddies.

Now Food Buddies is planning to broaden out to all age groups, for anyone who may face extra challenges around food. This could be because of social or geographical isolation, dietary issues or financial issues.

We are also making links with dementia-friendly communities in East Lothian and other areas. We are developing training packages for students and staff around ways of supporting people with dementia to eat.

Thanks to Food Buddies our catering people are changing all the crockery - instead of plain white we will have a blue rim so that it's easier to see. Borders General Hospital

Food Buddies is funded by the Life Changes Trust for 5 years. For more information about Food Buddies visit <https://urlzs.com/dUrs1>

Celebrations

Food Buddies is 5 years old this year! We were hoping to have a few celebratory events - we still hope to be able to do this in some shape or form, even if a simple tea and cake in the garden.

We are also planning a celebration event in the Scottish Parliament on the 1st September in partnership with Living Streets to celebrate all the fabulous work people do to make a difference to their communities but we will need to wait and see if that will need to be postponed so more information to follow when we know more.



GARDEN BUDDIES

Garden Buddies developed as an 'offshoot' of Food Buddies, linking older people with green spaces and at the same time bringing in some younger people to contribute to the physical efforts and the banter! We began in one community garden and have since 'self-seeded' to connect groups with other areas of land or garden space.

I'm no good at school work but when I come here I get to feel like we are all equal.

Sometimes due to weather the activities continue indoors...with knitting, IT training and more. The friendship and respect between the different age groups is the key ingredient.

P taught me how to plant potatoes - I did all the digging and he told me what to do!

It's wonderful to spend time in the garden with the young people. I don't think we'll let them go back to school!

Since Lockdown the groups can no longer get together but we have been helping some of the community gardens to share good practice tips for safe volunteering, so that volunteers can keep the gardens growing ready for people to come back to after the current restrictions. We have also had a successful Crowdfunder to raise funds to produce two tips leaflets for gardening as we get older. Look out for a virtual launch very soon!

We can't wait to see everyone back out in the gardens for some real celebrations! For more information visit Garden Buddies.



RURAL WISDOM

Scottish Borders is part of Rural Wisdom, which is a project that brings together places across Scotland and Wales to learn how rural communities support and include people as they get older.

Just before lockdown we were about to embark on a series of transport consultations across the Borders in partnership with Living Streets to find out what people's transport needs were and what would make a difference/encourage them to use public transport more. Rather than do nothing during lockdown we have decided to make our questionnaire into an online survey and add a little about what transport is like now during lockdown and what you would like to see happen after lockdown. If you can please take the time to take part and give us your thoughts? <https://urlzs.com/nBB4u>

People in the 9 areas are swapping ideas and experience on ways to cope with the current situation and it is great to see how resilient and creative people are.

Rural Wisdom is a partnership project funded by the National Lottery. For more information about Rural Wisdom visit <http://ruralwisdom.org/>



LINKS EYEMOUTH

Over in Eyemouth we have been supporting a families group, LINKS, to coordinate social events around good food choices. Outside the Box have provided practical and virtual support, including obtaining continuation funding, giving IT advice and delivering an outdoor pizza session! The project is coordinated by a young mum who, herself being at the heart of the community, has lived experience of the day-to-day challenges encountered by many families.

Over the past year the group have enjoyed Halloween pumpkin carving and soup-making, an outdoor pizza session, weaning workshops and much more. In between times they have built up a strong virtual community, with recipe sharing and general support in between sessions. Lockdown has not fazed the inventive and resourceful participants, who have embraced the Lockdown with a brand new logo, special LINKS Lockdown aprons, and virtual live cookery sessions!

Find out more here <https://otbds.org/links-eyemouth-take-their-good-food-community-online>.

COMMITTED TO GOOD SUPPORT

We're just getting going with our Committed to Good Support project, and we need your help. This is a new project funded by the Scottish Government's Supporting Communities Fund which aids the continuation of the important work being done to support locally led projects and increase the tailored support provided to older people in response to the coronavirus. In partnership with lots of community groups we are developing practical resources that:

- Make it easier for community groups' immediate response to Covid.
- Make it easier for older people to get the support they need in this crisis stage and as long as this continues.
- Put community groups in a stronger place for the next stage of responding to Covid-19 and being part of how communities in Scotland work in the future.

We will pull together material from a range of sources and put this into new, shorter forms that are accessible and practical for community groups and older people.

Resources will be published on a regular basis over the next few months so please keep an eye on our project page for them or please get in touch if you would like to be involved in pulling together the resources.
<https://urlzs.com/4VgU1>

GETTING THROUGH LOCKDOWN

As we all know, the Covid situation and Lockdown took people unawares, there was no time to plan and we suddenly had to make the best of a bad situation. Outside the Box have been very impressed at the resilience and initiative-taking of communities in these times. We have seen people work to their strengths, making new connections, giving up their time despite trying personal circumstances...and now many communities are coming through the crisis stronger, more connected and more resilient.

Travel restrictions and social distancing rules put a stop to many normal activities, so the OTB South-East Team looked around to see what could be done locally or virtually. Here are a few snippets of what we got up to during Lockdown:

PENICUIK: we worked with Penicuik Ambassadors, a group set up to help vulnerable people with practical necessities including shopping and other support. We delivered shopping and provided 1:1 help and support.

PEEBLES: we supported the local Covid mutual support team with surveys, risk assessments, covering printing and helpline costs and general admin support.

We also supported a local recipe-sharing group to obtain funding to print a Lockdown recipe booklet - in aid of Borders Women's Aid.

EYEMOUTH: we supported the LINKS Eyemouth group from afar to continue with their innovative cooking and sharing activities.

BORDERS-WIDE: we kept in regular contact with hard-to-reach people, such as those in sheltered housing, via managers. We shared links by email and social media to enable people to be as creative and active as possible, and to stay connected where possible.

We are currently looking at ways of supporting older people to be better connected digitally, so that even if they cannot meet face to face they can stay in touch with friends and family.

So it's not all bad news! Like others in the community, we have:

- New connections.
- New ideas and opportunities.
- New friends and partners.
- New appreciation of the simple things in life.



LOUD AND CLEAR

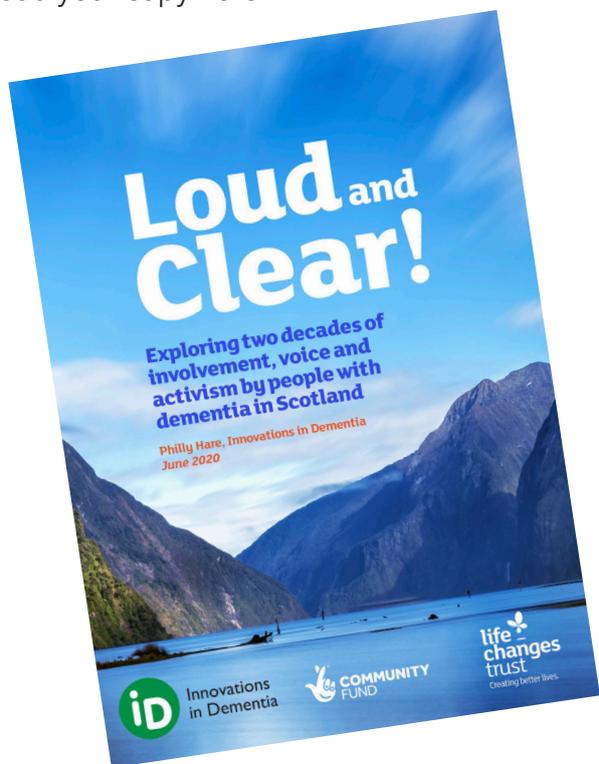
The Life Changes Trust have published a landmark book, 'Loud and Clear', which tells the story of how people living with dementia in Scotland have become activists and influencers in their own right over the last twenty years.

It's the first book of its kind, charting the history and telling the story of how people with dementia in Scotland confronted the status quo. The story is told largely through the eyes of dementia activists themselves, and reflects their successes and struggles to achieve ground-breaking change.

For many years, people with dementia were largely undiagnosed, unseen, unvalued and ignored. With no way to have their voices heard, they were never consulted on policies that affected their daily lives, and were turned away from conferences – on dementia.

Over the last twenty years, this has started to shift, thanks to a group of people in Scotland living with dementia, speaking up and becoming activists themselves. After decades of silencing and discrimination, people with dementia have been joining forces, taking action and campaigning for social change. Their work has changed policy in Scotland and influenced others across the world.

This book tells their story. For more Information or to download your copy here.



FAMILIES WELLBEING

Most peer support and activity groups have stopped meeting in their usual way, some have moved to delivering support/ classes virtually or by phone. But this means that families and young people have very few opportunities to connect and make contact outside of their own homes, which is having a significant effect on their mental health and ability to cope with the current situation.

Our Families Wellbeing project which is funded by the Scottish Government's Wellbeing Fund is looking to support people to feel more connected, less lonely, more resilient and supported. We are bringing together a range of practical ways to connect with people now and in the future to encourage people to maintain and build connections in their communities and with neighbours as well as peer connections.

We will be producing some resources including; activity packs, ways to stay safe, ideas for making contact with your neighbours and much more. We will also be working with two new family digital peer support groups in Midlothian and Borders where we will be having weekly activity sessions including belly dancing and yoga and creating a safe space for people to chat, get and share ideas.

More information about the project can be found at <https://otbds.org/projects/families-wellbeing> If you would like more information about the Peer Support groups in Midlothian and Borders please get in touch with Ruth or Christine.

Get in touch

We work with many partners in the Scottish Borders, Midlothian, East Lothian and beyond...and are always looking at ways of supporting others. Please get in touch with Ruth or Christine if you have an idea for filling a gap to help make communities more connected and resilient.

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Foundation Scotland

GREENCOAT
UK WIND



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