

OUTSIDE THE BOX SOUTH-EAST NEWSLETTER: SUMMER 2022

Hello and welcome to our latest Outside the Box South-East Newsletter. Where has the year gone, it is flying by. It has been great being able to get out and see people in person again, it really does feel like some sort of 'normality' is returning.

As always, we have been very busy here in the South-East, here is a snapshot of what we have been up to.

NEWTOWN NEWS

As the Rural Wisdom project came to an end our Connecting Equalities project began. Connecting Equalities is a new Outside the Box project which is working alongside older people and groups to focus on empowering them to realise their human rights and influence change. We ran a series of drop-ins throughout early spring on Energy Efficiency, Keeping Yourself Safe from Scams and Getting What you are Entitled to.

Fiona has left us to have a baby, whose arrival we are imminently awaiting. We had hoped to be able to share a photo of the new arrival but our timings just didn't coincide. After the summer we are looking to set up a baby and toddler peer support group in the village so watch this space and social media for more information.

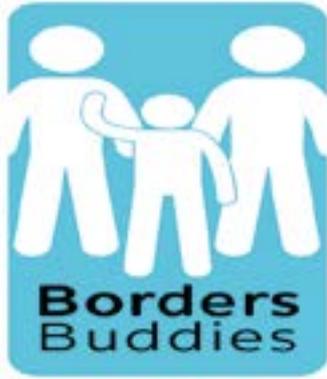


CONNECTING THROUGH OUTDOORS ACTIVITIES

We have had lots of fun in the outdoors recently as part of the Eyemouth Whole Systems approach, a multi-partner initiative aimed at supporting local families to become more active and eat healthier. We coordinated the outdoor cooking and having fun in the outdoors sessions which included den building, environmental art, raft building and of course cooking on the camp fire. We are delighted to be part of the roll out of more sessions inspired by these activities across the Borders in the coming months. Linking in with the 6 Ways to be well in the Borders, these sessions are supporting workers in CLD to take families outside.

The cooking outdoors didn't stop there - we supported Eyemouth Primary School with their end of John Muir Award cook out making tasty kebabs for more than 50 hungry children!





The pilot Borders Buddies project funding period has come to an end, but from this have sprung legacy projects - as well as Garden Buddies we are hoping to run some inclusive golf sessions in Peebles, in partnership with Golf in Society. We have also been hearing from people that there is much need for the Borders Buddies project in other areas, so we are hoping to obtain funding to take it to other parts of the Borders - watch this space for more details.

EAST LOTHIAN UPDATE

It has been a busy few months in East Lothian as we worked alongside the members of New Beginnings Club to design a new newsletter.

Focus groups, community consultation events and one to one chats around Adult Learning also kept us busy.



JUBILEE EVENTS

We have had lots of fun eating scones (and healthier alternatives) for the last few weeks as Newtown, Greener Peebles and LINKS all held Jubilee celebrations.



LINKS EYEMOUTH

The LINKS project has been back in full swing, working in partnership with Splash and the Community Larder in Eyemouth to send out recipe bags to families in Eyemouth and beyond. The recent tasty, low-budget meals have been going down very well, especially the Jubilee bags for which they obtained extra funding. This event was held in the hall too, with healthy royal-themed food and kids' crafts and bouncy castle. We met some new and old families, it felt great to be back!

LINKS people have also taken part in some of the outdoors training sessions, building their confidence for having fun in the outdoors over the summer.



Mums supporting mums research

A number of years ago Outside the Box received funding from CORRA to support the setting up of some groups for young mums. This was following concerns around maternal mental health. Now, some of the babies and toddlers from those groups are at high school. We thought it would be good to catch up with some of those mums, and also some new 'Lockdown' mums, to find out the impact of informal peer support for those early days with a baby or toddler, and any longer-term impacts of ongoing peer support among mums. The full report will be available very soon. Key findings of this research are as follows:

- many new mums feel isolated and alone at the time around the baby's birth
- the support of other mums at this time made all the difference for some
- informal mums' peer support happens in different ways, and can be a postcode lottery
- it is all about being able to speak to others who are going through the same thing at the same time as you
- many areas have a lack of relevant local information for new mums, with less happening in rural areas
- voluntary groups are often not sustainable as mums move on
- many older mums have valued informal peer support as their children have grown up

New Chief Executive

It is all change at the top here at Outside the Box, Anne Connor our founder and Chief Executive has decided to retire. Louise Willson who is our current deputy will be taking over the reins as Chief Executive from the 1st July.

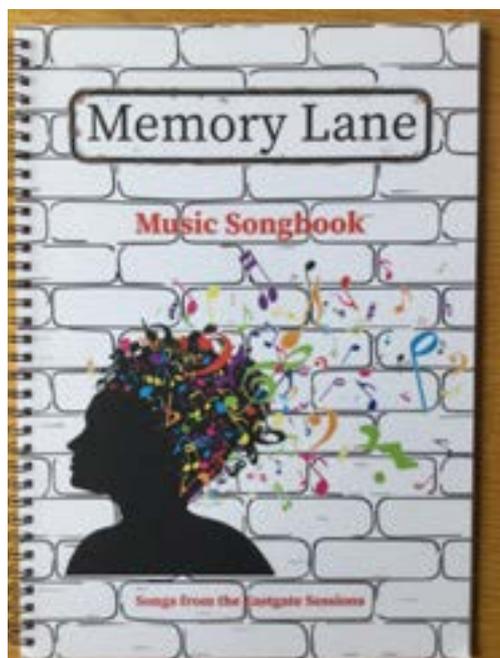


LIFE CHANGES TRUST SHARED LEARNING

Over the past year Outside the Box South-East Team have felt privileged to have been entrusted with coordinating shared learning among Life Changes Trust Creating Better Lives regional dementia projects. In the Borders 10 very unique projects, from Memory Cafes to Music, have come together from time to time for a catch-up on what is going well, how to solve challenges and issues, and to celebrate the richness and diversity to be shared among people living with dementia and their unpaid carers.

Life Changes Trust has ended its funding now, but it leaves behind a rich legacy of sustainable projects and, more importantly, a better understanding of living with dementia within communities.

'I can't wait for the new term - Wednesdays are special again' Memory Lane Music, a project by Nomad Beat Community Music School



Garden Buddies

Our lovely friends at the Peebles CAN Community garden, which we have been involved with for several years, have changed their name to Greener Peebles. We were pleased to be able to attend their launch event, which doubled up as a Jubilee scone-fest and gave people the chance to socialise and chat about local green issues. Our partnership project, Garden Buddies, is open to all those who would like to come and socialise and volunteer in the garden. Contact ruth.n@otbds.org for further info.



BORDERS/SOUTH-EAST IDEAS GROUP

We are looking for people to join our ideas group. This will be an informal group where we will check out ideas and what we are hearing; usually just in a virtual way and with no fixed commitment. If you would like to be part of the group contact christine@otbds.org

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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