



OUTSIDE THE BOX ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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

WE HELP BUILD STRONG, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES, BY CREATING THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT ENABLE THIS VISION TO BECOME REALITY.

YOU CAN FIND OUT
MORE ABOUT OUR
WORK BY VISITING
www.otbds.org

OR FOLLOW US ON



WE WORK
ALONGSIDE PEOPLE
TO CREATE
STRONG, INCLUSIVE
COMMUNITIES.

OUTSIDE THE BOX 2022

In 2022 we kept learning and using our human-rights based approach to supporting community-led creativity, action, and influence. We supported people, groups and communities to build different connections and find ways to navigate challenges. We worked with people in new areas, developed new partnerships and networks, and worked with people turning good ideas into reality across Scotland.

THIS YEAR WE...

Worked together with more than 100 community groups and organisations creating sustainable community solutions.

Supported over 1500 people, in 40 local areas across Scotland to be more involved and shape their communities. 7500 more people were indirectly impacted, like community group members and people benefiting from new initiatives.

Created and helped communities create over 20 resources, and other creative media like film and poetry.

Contributed to national policy conversations and responded to national and local consultations feeding in the issues raised by people we work alongside.

Community-
led action

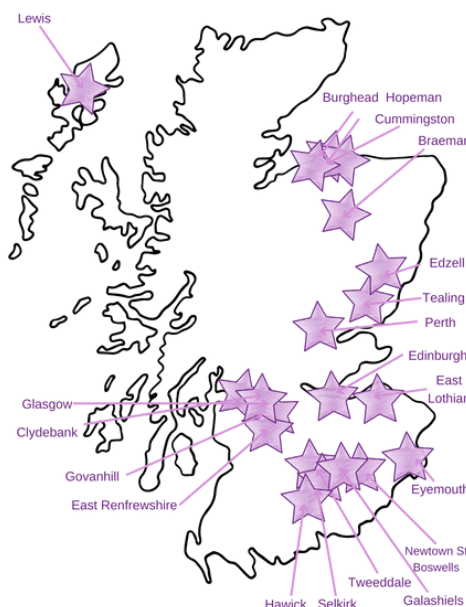
Cultures of
kindness,
respect and
inclusion

Access to
support that
helps people
live well

Approaches
that nurture
wellbeing and
resilience

Opportunities
to participate
and influence

Networks to
share ideas
and increase
connections



“

2022 has been about new initiatives, and positive transitions for Outside the Box. In the summer, Anne Connor, our founder and first chief executive retired. Anne and the team had planned for her retirement over a few years, developing and embedding processes to sustain the organisation and the creative way we work. We worked with Animate to develop self-managing teams and the Dream Collective, an Australian leadership organisation, on recognising and developing leadership throughout the organisation. We are now sharing this shared leadership approach with the whole staff team and the organisations and communities we work alongside.

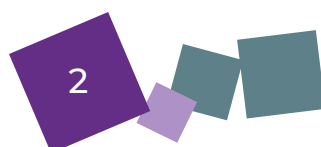
For us, success is life being better for people, and people and communities knowing there are more choices and opportunities that they can follow. This year we have taken on new pieces of work that allowed us to reach more people in more locations and also to address the rising cost of living.

And for 2023 we want to do more, taking Anne's legacy forward - identifying where new approaches and initiatives can create positive transformation, working in hope alongside communities, and supporting them to shape the world around them (including places, activities, services and policies) so it works well for people and how they want to live their lives.

Thank you to the fabulous staff team for their ideas, commitment and hard work and to our Trustees for their oversight and support. And a huge thank you to all the people, groups, organisations and communities we worked together with in 2022. By co-operating, sharing ideas and resources, and building strong, trusting relationships, together we accomplished so much. From small activities, to bigger lasting changes, it was all made possible by your commitment to helping grow a culture of rights, inclusion and support for everyone in our society and communities.

”

Louise Willson,
Chief Executive, Outside the Box



MOMENTS OF FREEDOM

Moments of Freedom, led by New Scot women resettled in Clydebank – is a safe space for women to come together to be themselves, make connections, share their skills and expertise to shape their local community for the meaningful integration of their families.

For our last group session of the year, we headed to McMonagles for lunch – it's become our end of year tradition! We talked and laughed (a lot!) and reflected on the successes, achievements, and learning that came from all the hard work the women put into the project this year.

This year brought us back together in-person. After almost two years working on zoom, we were able to start meeting regularly in Centre81 and see the wonderful staff who work there. They have always supported our work and offer a warm welcome to everyone at the centre.

This year also saw the re-launch of our social media pages – we're delighted that so many people are connecting with our ideas and approaches through our posts and pictures. Our social media has really helped us reach other groups who are doing amazing work in their communities. These connections inspire us, our work, and our plans for 2023. We value all the partnerships and associations that we have been able to nurture over this past year – our film with Ignite Theatre being a recent highlight.

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Being on STV news
and making our film –
they are my top
highlights.
”

“
Meeting back in
person – we are at our
best when we are
together in the room.
”

“
Everything! The
whole year is my
highlight – I can't
pick just one!
”

“
The strength of our
group – there are now
15 of us, and we are all
committed to our work
together.
”

“
The response to our social
media has been amazing.
It's great to be connected
to so many people – not
just in Scotland but
across the world.
”



MOMENTS OF
FREEDOM
لحظات الحرية

New Scots connecting with communities
“Where we are now is what matters most”

MOMENTS OF FREEDOM



FAMILIES SUPPORTING FAMILIES



This year's Families Supporting Families work involved supporting groups of people getting together for meaningful peer-support from the East to West coasts. We've been helping small groups with the practical aspects of developing peer-support spaces which run in a sustainable, inclusive way, and sharing their learning and community knowledge more widely.

The research we conducted with mums who have been involved in peer support groups, as organisers and taking part, showed it was uniquely different to other kinds of support available. For all the parents we spoke to, peer support made an impact on their feelings of being informed and empowered.

Passing on community knowledge and stories has always been an important part of how people support each other through life's joys and challenges. When people, for example, sit and knit together, the conversations that happen help knit a connected, supportive social fabric. We've seen many peer support groups become that space for storytelling, and passing on useful knowledge around accessing support, taking care of ourselves and each other and challenging barriers.

The Queer Families peer support group, a project we worked with LGBTQ+ parents to set up in 2018, has also been connecting with community storytelling in 2022.

We shared learning from the online LGBTQ+ Fertility Support event, which gave families a chance to discuss the support that's there, and missing, from the fertility processes for LGBTQ+ people in Scotland. People who joined were at different stages in the process, or had been through it, and were able to share experiences around accessing support, and encouragement and advice.

We also took part in the Govanhill Community Food Market, which had the theme of 'Food Stories', celebrating the area's multicultural communities and how food can connect us. As well as delicious Algerian flatbread and lemon cake Soul Food Sisters kindly gave us, we enjoyed lots of great conversations and ideas shared.

As it can be tricky to access a balance of inclusive children's books, as Zero Tolerance's research into nursery libraries found, the group has started planning storybook events. We're also hoping to explore how different forms of storytelling can help build community wellbeing – maybe with music, film, comic books and zine-making – in 2023.

“Everyone deserves to have fertility and birthing experiences that give them dignity, respect and autonomy.”

Deva (facilitator)



COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

In 2022 we gathered examples from across Scotland of community solutions to giving people better access to health and social care, and taking pressure of health services. We held several digital drop-in events over February, March and April to create a safe space for people to share experiences of community organisations delivering support and ideas for solutions.

From these events and other conversations, we produced a final report, report summary and digital diagrams and accompanying notes.

We also created a series of case examples and published these on our website. These are detailed examples showing how people in communities identified a problem in their area or service and came up with a way of improving the situation. Each case study also provides suggestions from these experiences, to help other people in other places in Scotland adapt the idea.

We hope that these resources from September will help to make better use of local resources and services during winter months and help communities across Scotland to get ahead and be better prepared for future demands and pressures on services.

We have been sharing these reports and case studies on social media and with other communities across Scotland, to highlight the work already going on and highlight examples of what is working well, and the challenges communities are facing.

“The community sector is a large, diverse range of thousands of organisations doing different things and working in different ways. This diversity needs to be better understood and seen as a strength.”

“Everyone can do something to increase overall capacity to create better outcomes for individual people and for the health care system overall.”

Work done in partnership with Healthcare Improvement Scotland.



EVALUATION AND CONSULTATION IN COMMUNITIES

Supporting consultations, participation, and opportunities for good conversations is a big part of what we do.

Every year, as well as engaging and planning with the communities we work with, we support other organisations create meaningful, inclusive consultations, evaluations, and plans. We always enjoy thinking creatively to make these accessible for everyone, and getting alongside people in the community to listen, find out what's going on, what's working, and what people want to see change or grow in the future.

In 2022, we started evaluating a Glasgow-based programme of activities for young people and money support for families, and Bikes for Refugees, another project based in Glasgow which helps new members of the community get bikes and stay connected.

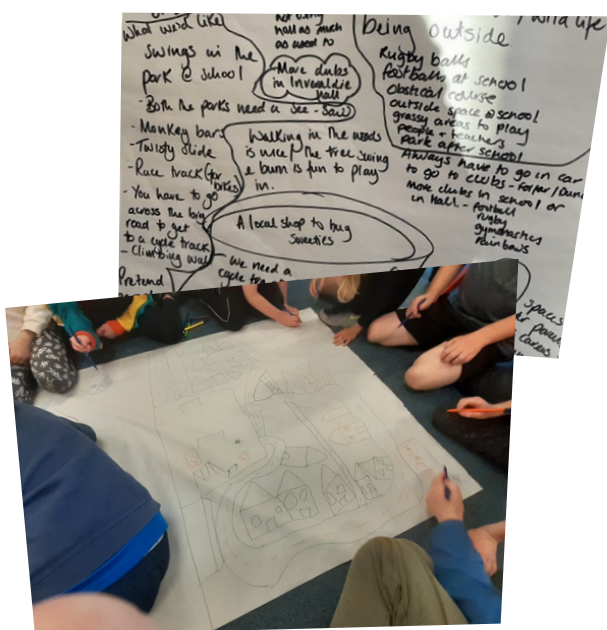
In East Lothian we worked with 117 people living with dementia and their carers, collecting and sharing their stories and experiences to shape the dementia strategy for East Lothian. One carer said after going to a peer support session:

"I'm gobsmacked about how well I feel after it!"

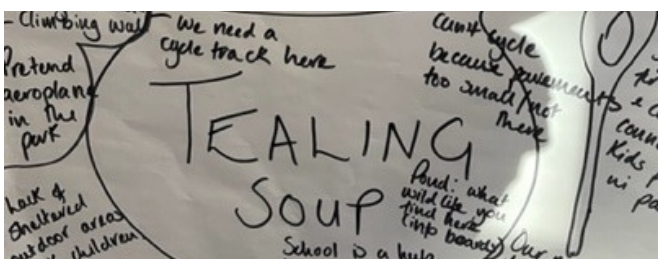
We also worked with Volunteer East Lothian on consultation around the Community Transformation Agenda for Adults with Complex Needs, helping involve everyone in the discussion. People shared their experiences and what matters to them in community planning, highlighting that it's really helpful being involved early on, so everyone has a chance to shape and plan for changes.

“It was really important that we talked and listened to people in the community about what was important to them. For community consultation, the best people to ask are Outside the Box.”

In Tealing in Angus we carried out a community wide consultation gathering ideas and suggestions for future priorities for windfarm community benefit money. We used digital surveys as well as speaking with over 300 people of all generations in the community. The conversations and ideas kept flowing, and we went along to lots of different local activities to meet as many people as possible. We made TikToks with teenagers living in Tealing, played pickle ball, and had afternoon tea and conversations with most of the village. After sharing ideas, people had time to give feedback and develop the suggestions for positive developments in the village. People built on each other's ideas, like spaces for young people, a community café, a programme of events, improving community transport and access around the area, and exploring possibilities for green energy and social enterprises.



TALKING TO TEALING



CONNECTING EQUALITIES

Connecting Equalities takes an intersectional approach to working with diverse groups of older people and their wider communities by supporting them to connect their everyday experiences with rights and equalities. The project explores how we can work collectively to challenge multiple inequalities and enables people & communities to connect with decision-makers and media, to ensure their contributions are part of shaping what matters to them for a good life.

Our connecting equalities work in 2022 has included supporting older people and activism around fuel poverty and inadequate housing in Moray, supporting the members of New Beginnings Club in East Lothian to design and create a newsletter, the Selkies wild swimming group to explore options for raising money for an accessible ramp and the Caddonfoot Kurlers to continue to grow and support other new age kurling groups to get started. With the cost of living having a growing impact on the quality of people's lives, we hosted sessions on energy to share information and have conversations..

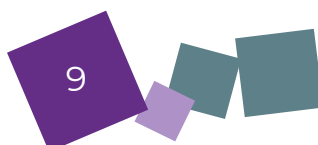


Throughout 2022 we have continued to work in partnership with many organisations including Zero Carbon Moray & Dementia Friendly Tweeddale whilst also starting new partnerships with Community Justice Glasgow, Ayrshire HSCP & Emerging Leaders. We have also co-produced resources to support local communities access their democratic rights, from voting to influencing policies and sharing ideas between elections.

We have also been responding to policy consultations including the Dementia strategy and the Mental Health Strategy whilst also providing the Secretariat role for the Cross Party Group on Older People, Age & Ageing and we are also an active member of the Older Peoples Strategic Action Forum.



Thanks to funding from the Scottish Government as part of the Promoting Equality and Cohesion Fund and Equalities and Human Rights Fund

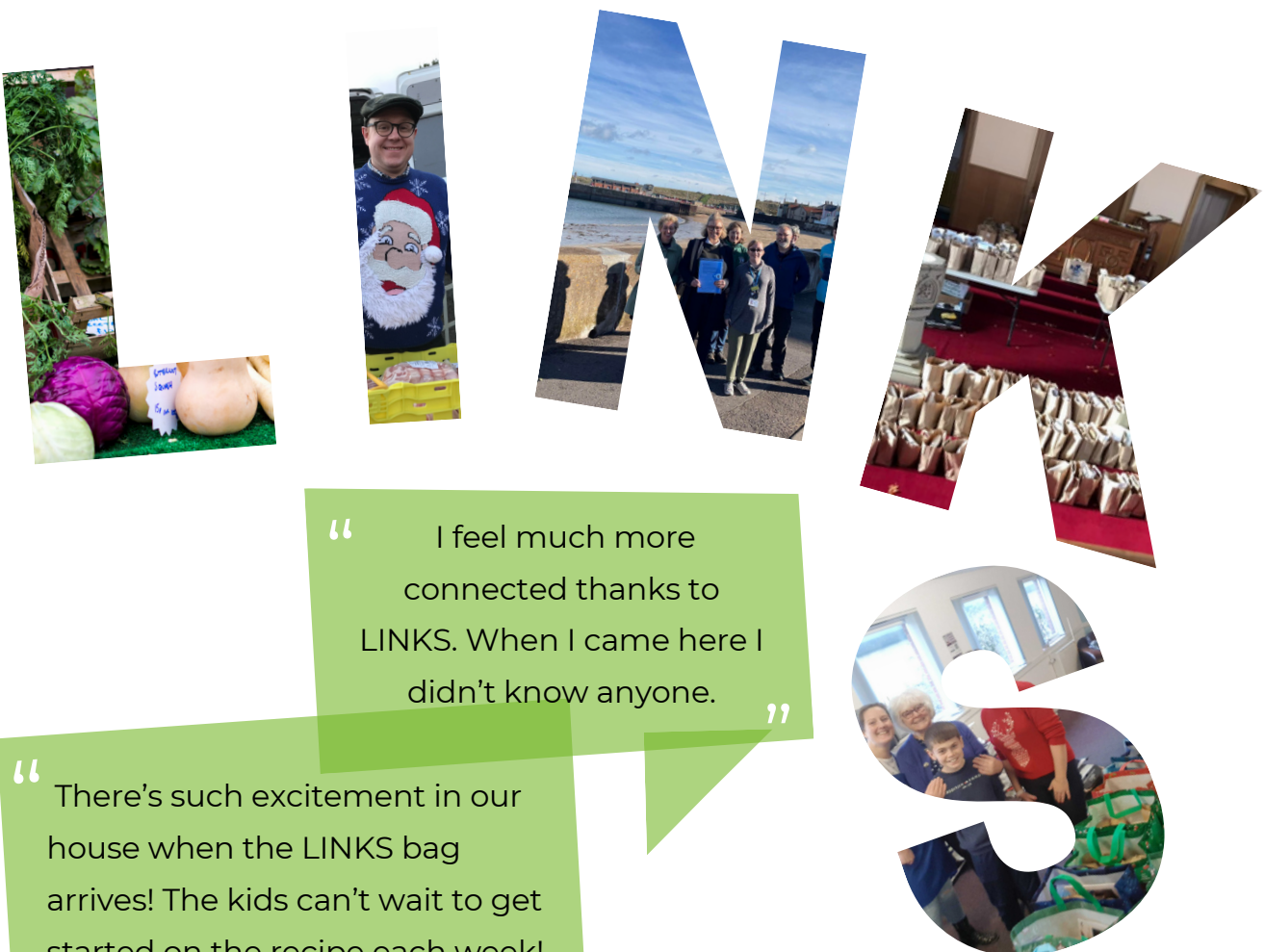


LINKS EYEMOUTH

Building sustainable, local networks to make sure everyone can access enough good food, and enjoy being in a supportive community for sharing and learning.



The LINKS Eyemouth project had humble origins as a small pilot and has gone from strength to strength, attracting new funding and with new families joining every week. Over the year it has sent out free recipe bags to around 100 local families, not just in Eyemouth but in outlying areas too. The families have shared photos and stories from their cooking experience, with no stigma around the free food but instead making it a social event, connecting people virtually and celebrating healthy, low-budget family cooking. The closed Facebook group now has 424 members, posting regularly and sharing tasty recipe ideas and other local information. With support from the NHS Joint Health Improvement Team and in partnership with others in the community, LINKS has also restarted live events such as a Jubilee family day and weaning sessions.



“ I feel much more connected thanks to LINKS. When I came here I didn't know anyone. ”

“ There's such excitement in our house when the LINKS bag arrives! The kids can't wait to get started on the recipe each week! ”

Thanks to funding from Dronehill Windfarm Fund and National Lottery (Together for a Better Planet) with support from NHS Borders.

EYEMOUTH GATEWAY TO GOOD HEALTH



Building sustainable, local networks to make sure everyone can access enough good food, and enjoy being in a supportive community for sharing and learning.

Outside the Box has been outside in nature in 2022. This started with our involvement with the Eyemouth Gateway to Good Health initiative, a community-led whole systems project led by the NHS.

A small working group led by Outside the Box with support from other partners was set up to implement a plan to support outdoor activities including cooking. In order to develop local skills and confidence in delivering outdoor activities safely and meaningfully, a programme of free training sessions was coordinated for local workers and volunteers who deliver children's activities.

The practical skills sessions were led by Outside the Box (firelighting/safety) and Field to Fork (nature connection). Venues varied in order to showcase different natural environments, and a full set of outdoor kit was purchased for local groups in Eyemouth to borrow for free. To complement the training programme, a resource pack of activities and risk assessments was developed. It was distributed at training sessions and is available to download at www.otbds.org/resources.

Around 50 people were involved in the training either as participants, partners or volunteers. This successful project has supported local leaders to be confident delivering activities in the outdoors safely and effectively, promoting healthier lifestyles for people in Eyemouth area.



“ The teaching from OTB was very clear and structured, and the guidance in the pack and the risk assessments helpful to go to for reference. ”



“ We just lost track of time... I feel so much better for having spent time in the outdoors. ”

BORDERS BUDDIES

Building local networks of social connection and support in the Borders.

Borders Buddies began as a small pilot in the Tweeddale area, thanks to Scottish Borders Council Community funding. Its aim is to help people reconnect with activities they want to or used to enjoy, this could be shopping, going to a cafe or attending a class. We set up 'Buddy pairs' so that individuals are supported by someone with similar interests, for as long as they are needed. People find it hard to get outside and join activities in their community for lots of reasons, and Borders Buddies has been a space where everyone understands and accepts each other.

People found a lot of strength and friendship being in a mutually supporting pair, each helping the other with ongoing challenges, and building confidence. It's also been a flexible way for people to volunteer and take part in the community, with everyone on an even footing, and benefiting from the chance to meet different people. The project supports people for as long as they needed it. Many buddy pairs stay in touch as friends, even after they've gained a wider network of connections and feel confident to go out and about on their own. We are pleased that we have now been granted further funding through the National Lottery Community Fund to expand this project to Hawick and outlying areas of Tweeddale.



“

There's no 'one size fits all'
- it's all about how you
feel!

”



WORKING IN SUPPORTIVE, EQUAL WAYS

Inclusive leadership

“We handled the leadership transition really well, starting early on before Anne retired. We had a great handover to Louise, as well as building leadership across the whole team.”

“We’ve managed the leadership change so well. We’ve just seamlessly gone through it, adapted and supported each other.”

“We’ve put our learning around leadership into action in the team, and in recognising and valuing the leadership of communities we work alongside.”

Outside (the Box) team day

We had a wonderful outdoor team day in Peeblesshire, led by Christine and Ruth. We learned how to carry out outdoors risk assessments, lead an outdoor craft session, make hapazomes, build a fire, cook outdoors, and use a Kelly kettle.

The best part of the day was seeing the whole team and catching up. Our staff are based and work all over Scotland, from Elgin to Eyemouth, so it is always a great treat when we get the chance to all meet in person.

How we work

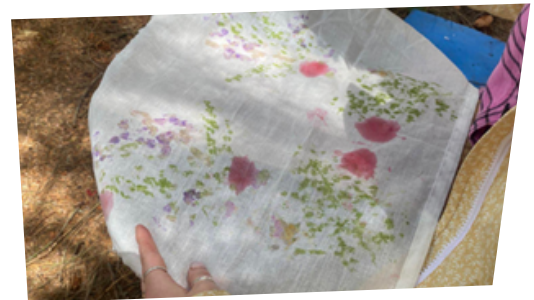
Outside the Box is a certified Living Wage employer and a flexible workplace. The whole team is part of shaping how we work, and making it an inclusive, enjoyable place to work. We are a Mum Friendly Workplace, having worked with mums to meet the standards they identified as being supportive and flexible. We’ve also been developing menopause friendly practices, and using the Fair Work Framework.

Supporting each other

“Working with an amazing team who’s so supportive is really motivating. People are always supporting each other and checking in, it makes a difference to me and the community.”

“It has been a challenging year in our communities. The supportive team dynamic and having space for critical, thoughtful conversations have made a huge difference.”

“It’s always so nice on a Tuesday when everyone gets together at the Team Meetings. Especially when we’re all across Scotland, or snowed in! I get to be nosy, and learn about all the good work people are doing from Moray to Borders.”



NETWORKS

Being part of networks both at local and national levels in various areas of interest have been a big part of our work in 2022. Through the pandemic many moved to become virtual networks but as 2022 progressed we were pleased to see more back to being in person as we really missed the little side conversations, we had with people during coffee breaks.

The Intergenerational National Network (INN) brings together people across Scotland, and further afield, who have an interest in intergenerational and multigenerational working and practices. The network meets three to five times a year. Meetings are hosted by member organisations, who offer venues and tea and coffee.

“ I just want to say thanks as a volunteer it is inspiring to see the amount of avenues that are possible to go down. ”

2022 also saw the reestablishment of the Cross Party Group (CPG) on Age, Age & Ageing for which we're delighted to hold the role of secretariat for. CPGs are not just for MSPs – individuals and organisations can also become members. The MSPs, who are members, are giving up their time as this is an area of interest to them and they choose which CPGs they want to be part of, if any meaning they do have a genuine interest and this an opportunity for people and organisations to speak to and work with MPSs on common interests. We've found this CPG to be a good way to raise issues that affect people we work alongside in communities across Scotland.

We continue to be active network members at a local level too, where we can share our learning with other groups and organisations. Being part of a network at a local or a national level brings many benefits, including:

- Being a voice for people and communities and share their experiences.
- Sharing our learning, knowledge, experience and what we have heard from other areas.
- Bringing an intersectional perspective to discussions.
- Collaborating and work in partnership.
- Contributing to policy and consultations with a stronger, shared voice.

COASTAL CONNECTIONS

Coastal Connections brings together local people who want to make changes on issues that are important to them and their communities along coastal Moray – areas around Burghead, Hopeman and Cummington. The work uses a community-led approach, and is fuelled by what people are telling us about how they want to develop their ideas and the challenges they want to tackle.

The first priorities have been around Fuel Poverty and Sustainable Energy, Transport, and Community Wellbeing, and they have grown deeper and more connected as people have got involved in exploring the issues. We have supported the development of a steering group which includes local people and community groups – they have been involved in developing the project from the start. The steering group and our local team are working together, guiding the project ensuring that the learning and opportunities are rooted in community.

We're working to support more people across generations to become part of community-led activity, contribute and influence local action, have a voice, and become connected with networks and communities across Moray.

Highlights of 2022 include:

- Working with community council to host a local democracy day to bring together local people, community groups and elected officials for useful, meaningful conversations.
- Supporting 'The Selkies', an accessible swimming group, to approach the local council about accessibility improvements to local beach access - successfully!
- Supporting communities to set up warm rooms, thinking about the approach and long-term solutions, and sharing learning.
- Supporting the Bus Committee to apply for funding for electric vehicle, and be part of connecting up warm spaces.



This 2-year project is funded through the Community-Led programme – an award from The National Lottery Community Fund, made possible by National Lottery players.

COMMUNITY LED IDEAS

Lots of people have ideas for making the world work better.

They identify a need – a local gap, something they can't access – and with some creativity and care it turns into a flourishing local community garden, bus, meeting centre, food network, wild swimming group, human rights organisation or social enterprise. Outside the Box exists to help good ideas grow into reality.

Here are a few Magic Moments where community leadership created something brilliant.



Moments of Freedom welcoming families to Scotland

In 2022 they held a welcoming event for Afghan families who are new to the community, using their experience of being new to Scotland to help them feel included and connected. They also held an event open to the wider community - with several local politicians coming along! Through Moments of Freedom the women are practicing inclusive leadership, connecting people, and sharing their learning with other New Scots groups and wider communities.



Festive recipes with LINKS Eyemouth

65 households signed up for Christmas-time recipe bags, with delicious produce. Asked how on earth she'd organise 65 bags in a few days, Charlene answered with her can-do energy:

“Last week I put together and shared 50 recipe bags by myself, so 65 will be easy peasy. I think if it's possible, we should just do it!”

Neighbourhood Networks

The Network members we supported to create community human rights action plans have been putting their learning into action, and developing their own sessions.



Our website has a library of resources for community groups and anyone who wants to find more ways to put their ideas into action.

CULTURES OF KINDNESS, RESPECT AND INCLUSION

When communities build strong relationships and a culture which respects everyone's human rights, everyone is better off. We often work alongside people challenging barriers and inequalities and finding ways to promote equal, supportive ways of being together in community.

Here are a couple of examples of communities building cultures where everyone is valued and welcome.



Democracy Day in Burghead

We helped organise an event in Moray for people to get together, find out about the channels of voice and power open to them, and take part in community discussions around warm rooms, access, carbon zero and more. The different creative conversations it sparked made it all worthwhile - leading to lots of action!



Moments of Freedom collaborated with Ignite Theatre to create a beautiful film sharing their experiences with themes of connection, and held a big preview screening at Glasgow Film Theatre. As the women in Moments of Freedom are the writers of their own stories, they're perfecting the edit themselves before holding more screenings. The group keeps finding ways to create space for kindness, understanding and inclusion.

“Being on STV news and making our film – they are my top highlights”

“My highlight this year was the strength of our group – there are now 15 of us, and we are all committed to our work together.”

Outside the Box always welcomes questions and chances to share learning and collaborate. Please do get in touch if you have an idea or want to work together!



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 TIME, KNOWLEDGE AND GOOD IDEAS.



YOU CAN FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR WORK BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE www.otbds.org OR FOLLOWING US ON

