

GRACE

PEOPLE • SUPPORTING • PEOPLE

Annual Report
2023 - 2024





Thank you

At GRACE our mission is to support adults in recovery from life trauma in a safe and supporting space, where people can work towards their personal goals and gain tools to build a brighter future for themselves and, by extension, their peers, family, friends and community. We can't do our work in isolation, though, and it takes an army of volunteers, funders and partners to keep GRACE delivering its services over the past year.

Along with our wonderful funders we wish to thank the Scottish Recovery Consortium, (SRC) Community Enterprise in Scotland (CEIS), the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC), Kirkintilloch Rotary and the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) for their continued support.

An average weekly footfall of 125 members through our doors in 2023/2024



122 referrals and self referrals to GRACE during 2023/2024



4915 volunteer hours contributed during 2023/2024, equivalent to a value of £56,227 (calculated using the National Living Wage)



Thank you for your invaluable
funding support during
2023/2024



**The Scottish
Government**
Riaghaltas na h-Alba



CORRA
FOUNDATION



**East Dunbartonshire
Council**





Why choose GRACE?

We asked our members why they choose to come to GRACE and this is what they said...

**PEER SUPPORT
FRIENDSHIP
LEARNING NEW SKILLS
FUN!!
CONFIDENCE BUILDING
ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY**

**BUILDS RESILIENCE AND
STRENGTH
PROVIDES PREVENTION
STOPS LIFE GOING
DOWN THE TOILET!**

**GOOD FOR ALL ROUND
MENTAL HEALTH
TOGETHER EVERYONE IS
LIKE AN EXTENDED
FAMILY
ACCEPTANCE**

**PURPOSE TO GET OUT OF
BED
BUILDING CONFIDENCE
A SAFE PLACE TO BE
YOURSELF**

**OPENNESS AND
STOPPING 'STUCKNESS'
ACCEPTANCE OF
PEOPLE'S DIFFERENCES**

**NON-JUDGMENTAL
ABILITY TO BE
YOURSELF
BRINGS YOU OUT OF
YOURSELF AND BUILDS
SELF-CONFIDENCE**



GRACE Sharing Time



GRACE Sharing Time is a network for organisations in the East Dunbartonshire recovery community who meet to share information and resources. The network has been running since 2017 and around 30 organisations attend each month. We asked some of the organisations why they attend GRACE Sharing Time and this is what they said...

“Social Security Scotland are delighted to attend GRACE Sharing Time events. We have made excellent connections with fellow attendees. GRACE has been a very positive partner in getting our name out locally and also being extremely positive when discussing our organisation” *Social Security Scotland*

“Over my years of working in East Dunbartonshire GRACE Sharing Time has been a key part of networking with other services. Some of WeAreWithYou’s greatest partnership working has stemmed from either hearing from someone sponsoring or chatting around the table and swapping details” *WeAreWithYou*

“I would like to reiterate how lovely all the staff are and what an amazing job you do! We really enjoy attending and we can’t thank you enough! It really does make a difference seeing people that work in the local area, it does work!!” *The Lennox Partnership*



Our Community Champion



Our Founder and CEO Robert Smith was nominated by Kirkintilloch Rotary for a Community Champion Award for Great Britain and Ireland, and received an invitation to attend the Birmingham awards ceremony in June to receive his award in person.



The Community Champion Awards are given in recognition of outstanding humanitarian service to improve the lives of others. The GRACE members are all very proud of Robert and are grateful for the commitment he continues to show to the charity and to our ethos of People Supporting People.



MSP Rona Mackay also put forward a motion with the Scottish Parliament in June congratulating Robert on being recognised by the community for his hard work and vision.

It was an honour to be nominated by the Kirkintilloch Rotary who continue to support GRACE and the community in their endeavours.



GRACE were invited to attend the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) national event in Perth by the winning team for 2023 from St Ninians High School in Kirkintilloch. YPI is a wonderful programme which allows secondary school students to compete against their peers to secure funds for their chosen charity, and GRACE are involved every year. We travelled to the Perth Concert Hall where our team had been asked to perform in front of a packed audience from all over Scotland.

The presentation included a fantastic poem about GRACE which had been written by one of the team. The Sunday Herald newspaper mentioned this amazing achievement and published the poem. Our staff had a wonderful day celebrating our team's win. We would like to thank the staff and students of St Ninians High School and the Wood Foundation who run the YPI across Scotland and we look forward to further partnerships in the future.



Art and Creative Thinking



Throughout the year our art workshops have truly been a hub of creativity, offering a rich and diverse array of art and creative thinking activities and processes. These opportunities have been open to both our existing members and those who have recently joined us. Through ongoing consultations with members and staff we have shifted towards a more peer support oriented approach, as opposed to the previous individual learning journey, although individuals do experience both throughout each block.

GRACE workshops maintain their structure in 10-week blocks, with each block offering distinct and enriching learning experiences and outcomes. Over the past year, we have successfully delivered a total of four of these unique blocks, enriching the lives of our members through artistic exploration and creative thinking.

10 members supported weekly in Auchinairn



12 members supported weekly in Hillhead



88 members supported over 2023/2024



East Dunbartonshire Community TV



The eight week pilot project was delivered at Harestanes Community Huts between September and December of last year, with a total number of nineteen GRACE members engaged.

The project was participant led from project start. Participants were fully responsible for conceptualisation, planning, filming, interviewing, editorial practice and implementation, program content and matters relating to development & delivery of such. Participants were fully supported by our arts and learning practitioners throughout.

Each workshop offered learning and teaching in:

iPad use incorporating file sharing via Gmail, Google Drive & AirDrop. iPads were utilised throughout delivery for planning and devisal, photography, filming and audio capture, and for editing filmed content.

Media deconstruction: We explored media content in all it's forms with particular focus relating to news delivery in both traditional and digital content format.



Digital Café

The Digital Café is one of the GRACE core activities and has been a vital tool in tackling digital literacy and social isolation in our community for many years.

A growing number of services are now accessed online and this can be extremely daunting for some. By promoting confidence in engaging with digitally based social media and digital forums and communities, and encouraging self-directed endeavour utilising digital technologies, we build key skills such as managing information, communicating, transacting, problem solving, creating, and being safe and legal online.

“First time over the doorstep in a long time. I'm a bit socially awkward but I felt really comfortable being here today. I've had a great time and I've learnt a fair bit too”

“It gives me a lot more confidence on the laptop as I was a bit freaked out by computers before joining GRACE”

“The Digital Café is a good thing for the Community as it teaches new computer skills to people. I've definitely benefited from it, when I first started going I wasn't good with techy stuff but over time I've had the chance to develop my knowledge”

“I fixed my washing machine having Googled how to”

**6 members
learning All
Things Laptop
weekly in
Auchinairn**



**9 members
learning All
Things Laptop
weekly in
Hillhead**



**10 members
learning All
Things iPad
weekly in
Hillhead**



The Help Yourself Hub



Our Help Yourself Hub has been a lifeline within the community for providing food, clothing and toiletries throughout the cost of living crisis that has had an impact on us all.

As well as the organisations below, we would also like to thank the members of the Kirkintilloch Rotary and the volunteers of Milton of Campsie Parish Church for the regular donations which have been very gratefully received.

We have also been delighted to welcome a new member of staff, our Help Yourself Hub Coordinator, who's role is dedicated to reducing food poverty in the community.





GRACE Community Yoga

Over the last year GRACE has delivered yoga classes to the local community in both Hillhead and Auchinairn venues, with the main aim to offer a holistic approach to health and wellbeing.

Classes have been planned to address the health issues and concerns of those attending our classes.

Examples of theme based classes

- Yoga for Back Care
- Yoga for Physical Balance and Fall Prevention
- Yoga for Emotional Balance
- Yoga for Supporting the Immune System

Our classes foster a sense of community and support, and enhance and promote a healthy lifestyle, as yoga can empower individuals to connect with body and mind leading to greater resilience and self-awareness.



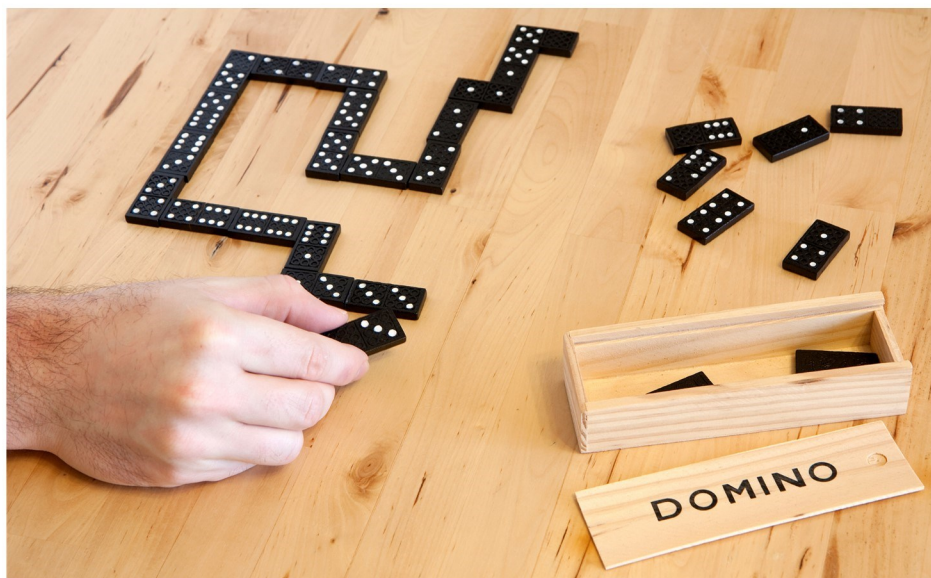
20 members supported weekly in Auchinairn



35 members supported weekly in Hillhead



20 members supported weekly in Hillhead beginners class



Men Time provides a safe and supportive space for men 18 years and older to connect, share, and navigate life's challenges. Men Time is a peer-to-peer recovery support model. Men are encouraged to actively engage in conversations and lend an ear to others, utilising their own lived experiences as a valuable tool for empathy and understanding. This sense of camaraderie fosters a sense of belonging and offers a holistic approach to recovery and support.

The group aims to promote mental health by facilitating open dialogue, reducing stigma, encouraging physical and mental health through promoting healthy lifestyle choices. It also combats social isolation by creating a sense of community and offering opportunities for men to take charge of their lives by setting new goals, pursuing meaningful pursuits, and fostering healthy living.

Men Time also serves as a valuable source of information on issues directly related to men's health and wellbeing, and encourages men to break out of the cycle of isolation, relapse and self-doubt.



Events

We love events at GRACE, whether we're joining in with community celebrations or staging our own, we like to get involved. Here is a sample of some of the events that GRACE has been a part of over the past year.



- Kirkintilloch Gala
- Kirkintilloch Canal Festival
- Remembering together event
- GRACE Film Premiere
- Party in the Car Park (Community Event)
- Scottish Recovery Walk
- The Glasgow Kiltwalk
- Lenzie Festival
- End Polio Now Day
- Easter Support
- Halloween Parties
- Christmas Parties
- Big Scottish Breakfast

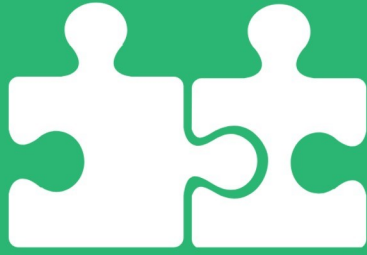


Our Wonderful Volunteers



GRACE would not be the organisation it is without our army of fantastic volunteers. Our volunteers mainly come from within, as part of the GRACE pathway, and we like to offer them as many training opportunities as possible for their personal development and empowerment. During the last year our volunteers have received training delivered by organisations such as the Alcohol and Drug Recovery Service, Alliance Scotland, the Scottish Recovery Consortium, Women's Aid, Glasgow Council on Alcohol and the Health and Social Care Partnership. Many of our core volunteers also have their Food Hygiene and Emergency First Aid at Work certificates. We would like to thank our training providers for giving our volunteers the chance to upskill and support the GRACE members as they were themselves supported.





GRACE

PEOPLE • SUPPORTING • PEOPLE

**Inspiring the Community
for over 12 Years**

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GRACE is a registered Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)
Scottish Charity Number SCO43551