

2018— 2019

GRACE



**'BUILDING CONFIDENCE
IN YOUR FUTURE'**



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OVERVIEW

Group Recovery Aftercare Community Enterprise (GRACE) is a local Peer Led membership based enterprise and a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). The group manages and operates a Recovery Aftercare group in the town of Kirkintilloch, serving the whole of East Dunbartonshire.

Established in May 2012, the group has already harnessed the commitment of local residents, East Dunbartonshire Council, and the voluntary sector to provide a weekly programme of activities in various local venues and continue to work to develop projects in the area.

GRACE provides aftercare for people who have completed or who are established in a recovery programme from addiction to alcohol, drugs or gambling, Mental Health issues, homelessness problems, but also from any other life trauma. The group aims to benefit not only the individual but also other family members. The group provides learning, training, health and well-being activities, personal development, and physical pursuits for those in need of support, enabling them to become a positive, useful member of their family and community, and also encourages members to engage in training or volunteering, which may lead to employment through increased confidence and enhanced skills.

GRACE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

GRACE supports individuals that have experienced substance misuse issues, mental health issues, bereavement and loss and loneliness and isolation, through a peer-led aftercare social enterprise, offering advice, support, fellowship, volunteering opportunities, social activities and educational courses. GRACE aims to support individuals that have experienced life trauma into a brighter future.

By offering a pathway between recovery and social inclusion, the main objective of GRACE is to assist members in building confidence to overcome trauma and avoid relapsing.

STRUCTURE

TRUSTEES

There are currently nine trustees on GRACE's board. Grace is very proud to have a vibrant and extremely skilful board. As an organisation we don't enforce any gender barriers, and we are delighted to see more women moving forward into these types of role.

Dr Indira Pole is a retired NHS GP and our current Chairperson. From school age Dr Pole has taken part in voluntary work with Red Cross in India and in the community to help school children in the slums of Mumbai. Later went on to mentor school pupils in the subjects she felt more confident about. As an NHS GP Dr Pole has taken a special interest in dealing with patients suffering from addiction, long term mental health issues, prevention of teenage pregnancy, and several chronic health conditions with the holistic approach to support patients and empowering them to cope and live purpose full life. Since retiring in 2012 Dr Pole has been engaged in voluntary service of mentoring in the community to improve the life chances of disadvantaged groups such as the secondary school pupils in Springburn and Easterhouse areas through Strathclyde University, long term re-offenders from Barlinnie Prison



through The Wise Group, health walks in the community through Paths for All and the Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

Lynne Hales has been involved in G.R.A.C.E. since its foundation. She was originally the Secretary of G.R.A.C.E and now is the Vice Chair. Lynne's background is mainly in administration, having worked for North Lanarkshire Council as secretary to a Head of Service, moving, after gaining qualifications in computing, to their IT Department. Lynne moved to Glasgow City Council to work in the Chief Executive Department as secretary to a Head of Service. Lynne was heavily involved in the FRG – Family Readiness Group, in a voluntary role as their secretary, helping families deal with military life, deployments to war zones, death and maiming of soldiers, and families moving from the States to Germany and Italy. Lynne has a COSCA Certificate in Counselling Skills.

Ivor McClure, our Secretary, has vast experience with working with vulnerable adults. Ivor was employed as a Mental Health nurse for many years and has volunteered in numerous support organisations. He is very much a community activist, with a close relation to Hillhead and East Dunbartonshire. Ivor is also a Community Council member and former Chair for the Hillhead Community Forum and his knowledge of the area and the sector is vital for GRACE's future. Being a very thorough, communicative and methodical person makes Ivor the perfect Secretary for GRACE.

Valerie Letham has worked in Retail Banking for the last 36 years. Roles included resolving staff issues, looking after and resolving customers concerns and queries, and Customer Service. Valerie has always been Customer Service driven. As a volunteer Valerie spent four years in Radio Lollipop at Yorkhill hospital for sick children, spending time on the wards with long stay patients or those that were far from home with no regular visitors. Valerie has also spent six years volunteering on a local committee for Childline, where she organised and managed fund-raising events.

William Devine is our Treasurer, and at a stage in his life where he wants to give something back to the community and support the incredible collaborative effort that has already gone in to making GRACE what it is today. He sees it as an incredibly valued resource in the community that is an open door for people to come in and be part of a thriving group of people all contributing in their own individual ways to a fantastic group ethic. His background has been in sales for many years, mainly in the financial arena where he is currently employed as a Regional Director with a globally owned asset finance business. He feels his financial and commercial expertise, as well as his negotiating skills and extensive business network UK wide, will be an asset to GRACE as it continues the excellent work, implements the outreach programme and moves forward. He fully shares the common philosophy with fellow board members about the purpose of GRACE and what we want to achieve as an organisation. William's commitment to GRACE will be longstanding and he looks forward to seeing what we can achieve as a board in the coming years.

Linsey Anderson completed a HND Beauty Therapy course at Moray College while working in her local Pharmacy for 15 years doing various jobs from serving the public until latterly training to be a Pharmacy technician until she left to look after her family. During the role of homemaker she was heavily involved in volunteering at Cullen Play Centre, which she became Chairperson of the committee for 3 years. This involved arranging staff and funding and general running of a much sought after childcare facility in the local area. GRACE has become a huge part of her life, not just for peer support and friendship, but she now also wants to give back and support the community. She believes the whole ethos of Grace is quite frankly widely needed, and to be part of the Board's vision of what GRACE can achieve is huge, not just for the members but for all involved.

Claire Taylor qualified as a teacher but changed her career to spend 20 years as a registered nurse. Claire has a wealth of health and wellbeing knowledge that she brings to the board. Claire lives locally



and has volunteered within the community for nearly 30 years. Claire is currently the secretary of the Strathkelvin Credit Union, a member of the Kirkintilloch Community Council and is involved with various Health Board initiatives. Furthermore Claire was instrumental in the formation and management of Hillhead Housing Association 2000 where she is currently the Chair. Claire has supported GRACE for many years personally and professionally and supports the concept of peer support which she believes, in her professional opinion, can be very successful.

EMPLOYED STAFF

Robert Smith is currently the only paid member of staff, holding the post of CEO and a member of the Board. Robert was the founder of GRACE, and has a huge wealth of knowledge and experience in recovery and aftercare settings. Robert is trained in a variety of practical elements pivotal to GRACE core delivery, including COSCA Counselling, HNC Social Care (grade A), First Aid, Food Hygiene, Moving and Handling, Health and Safety, Alcohol Brief Intervention, Customer Care and National Care Standards and ASIST training. Furthermore, he has also completed intensive training on Psychology, Mental Health First Aid, Money Mentoring and SMART facilitating.

Robert also has years of experience supporting vulnerable individuals through his volunteering work with the Citizens Advice Bureau and with a local Glasgow Resettlement Centre supporting people to overcome addiction issues. He has been a previous charity founder locally and an active fundraiser for Enable Scotland, Yorkhill Hospital and Erskine Hospital. He currently has Committee Membership of the Hillhead Housing Association, Hillhead Community centre users group, third sector interface managers' network and, previously, Hillhead Community Forum. The wide variety of professional managerial skills honed during his previous business and volunteering experiences have given Robert the skills to analyse problems and identify solutions to achieve a favourable outcome for all concerned. One of the main areas where all these skills are transferable to the GRACE vision is the aspiration to assist individuals to live independent lives as they move forward.

GRACE employs external sessional staff to run specific activities and courses. This reflects the group peer model approach where members collectively identify activities, training courses, or opportunities they deem relevant for them as individuals, but also for their peers. The Board and staff do all within their capacity to facilitate these requests. This often means we are only able to address some of our members' aspirations, due to limitations in funding. Examples would include, but are not limited to, drama workshops, gardening training, first aid, sign language, Digital Café, YOGA, etc.

VOLUNTEERS

In the past year over 15% of registered members have participated actively in volunteering (i.e. have volunteered in last six months). Volunteers have contributed approximately 9108 hours to GRACE without which the structure of the organisation would not be sustainable. These in-kind hours would have been a cost to GRACE of £81,972 based on the Scottish Living Wage rate of £9.00.

Since being established six years ago, GRACE has encouraged members to volunteer where possible. During this time, approximately 40% of total registered members have participated in volunteering activities. This represents over 100 Volunteers in 5 years.



VOLUNTEERING SUMMARY

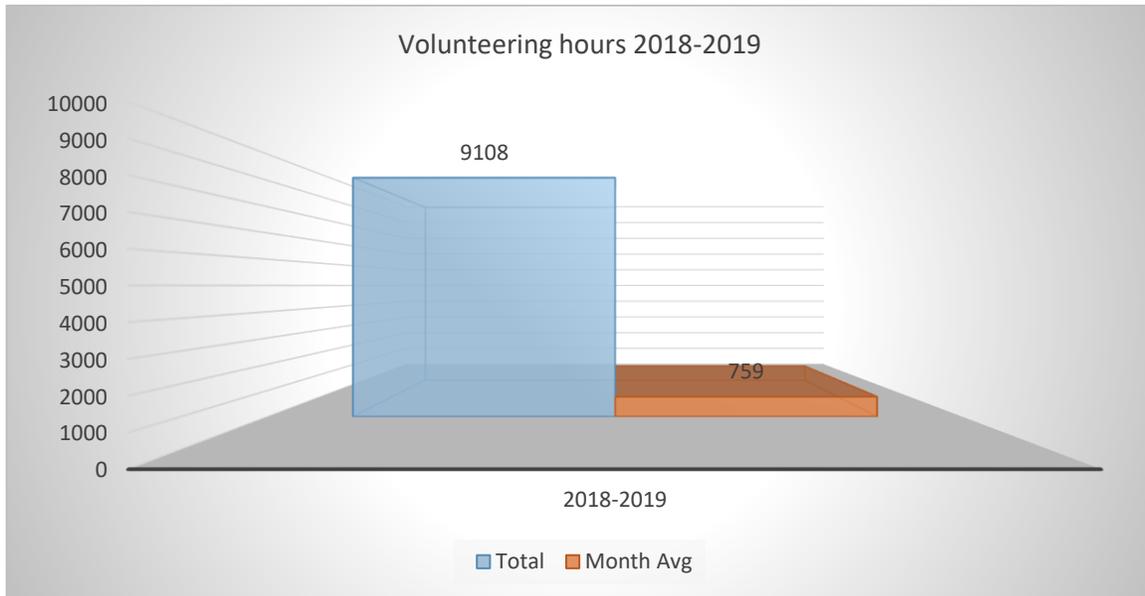


Figure 1: Volunteering hours 2018-2019

Volunteers have completed an outstanding total of 9108 hours with GRACE this year, and there is the intention to increase this total in 2019-2020 and to facilitate more volunteering with partner organisations.

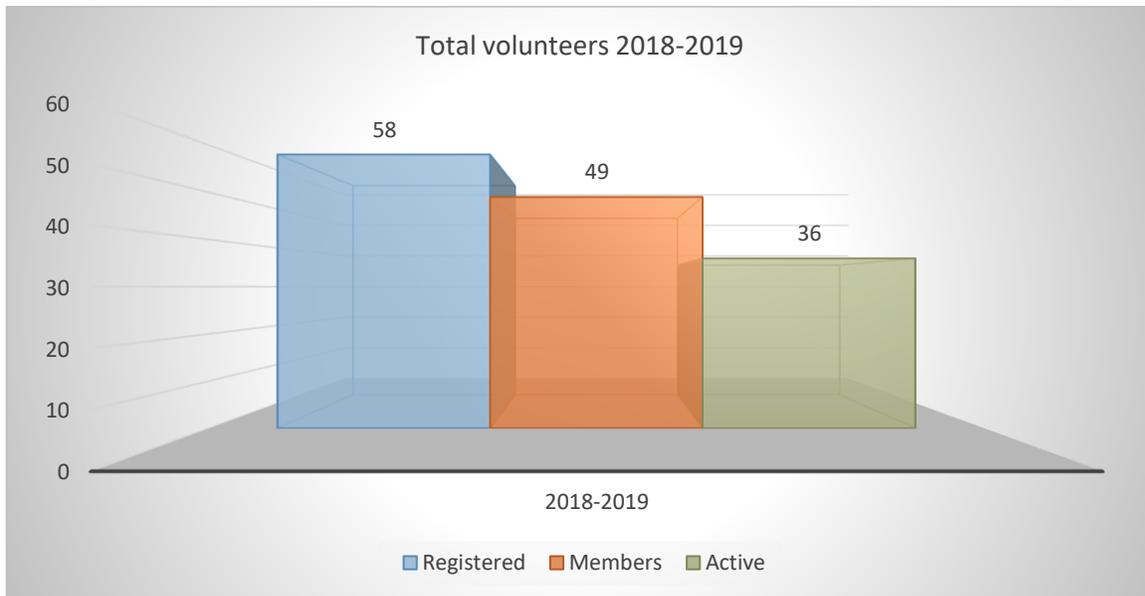


Figure 2: Total volunteers 2018-2019

GRACE has 58 registered volunteers, supporting the organisation in diverse roles such as Board Members, Admin Support, Peer Ambassadors, and Bookkeeping. GRACE has 47 members registered for volunteering, from whom 36 were active throughout 2018-2019. GRACE has 9 volunteers who are not



members of GRACE and for 2019-2020 the expectation is to see volunteering grow at a fast pace with new projects and partnerships.

MEMBERS

GRACE is a member led charity, and this is at the core of our existence. GRACE membership is open to any person who has recently overcome one of many life traumas and members come from many walks of life, people who have completed or who are established in a recovery programme from addiction to alcohol, drugs or gambling, Mental Health issues, Homeless problems, but also recovering from any other live trauma who led them to a spiral of social isolation, poor mental health and a total lack of confidence, quite frequently due to stigma from society.

GRACE is still growing our membership base, and although some come and do stay for long periods of time, we have members volunteering almost since our first year, other just need a helping hand to steer them in the right direction. We currently have almost 300 members.

The future is looking challenging, and at the same time exciting as we reach people further and further afield.

MEMBERSHIP SUMMARY

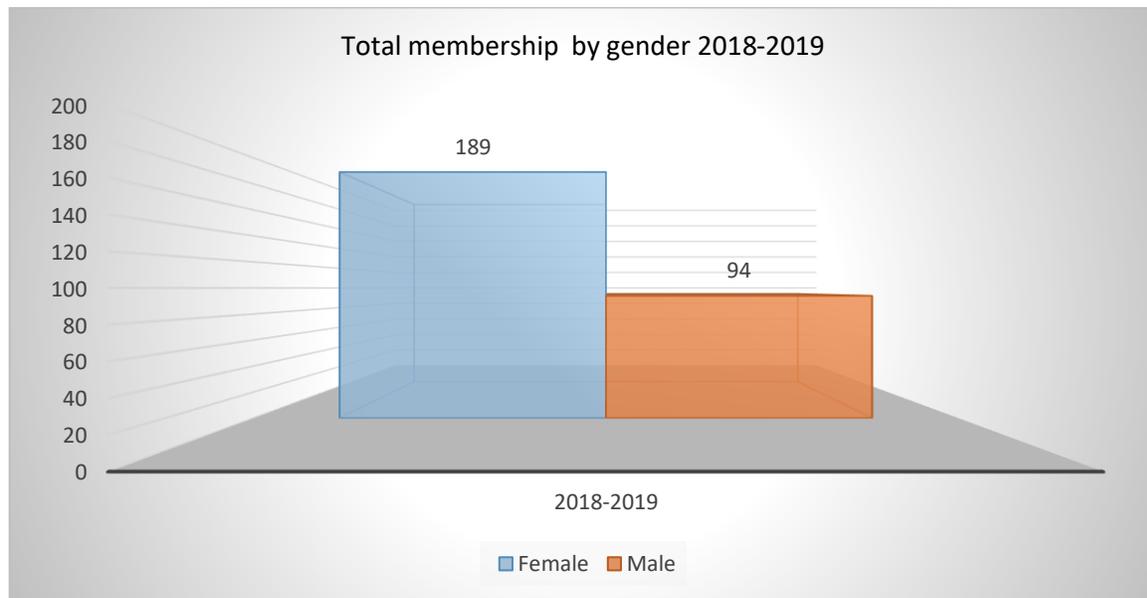
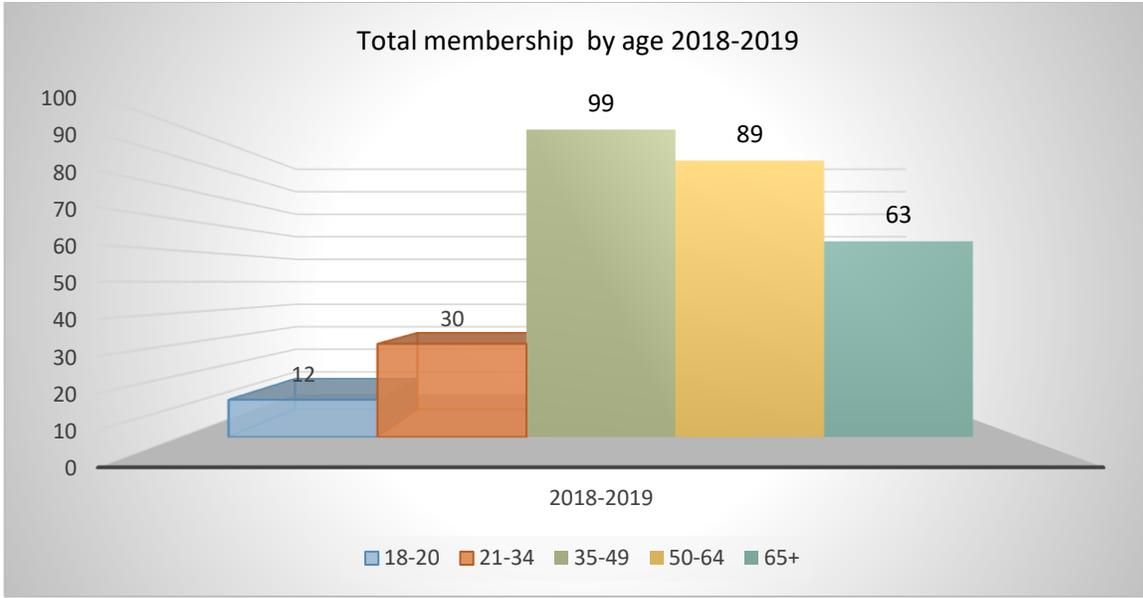


Figure 3: Total membership 2018-2019



GRACE had 293 registered members at the end of 2018-2019. Of those, 195 (67%) were Female and 98 (33%) were Male. There is still a clear majority of women engaging in GRACE’s services, this is nothing we planned for, it’s just the nature of our society. Nonetheless, and because we are clear that there are still plenty of men out there who can benefit from GRACE’s Peer Model of delivery, we will pave the way to open our services to increasingly more men. The Smart meetings are a prime example of this, but there are potential opportunities to look into joint work with projects such as the East Dunbartonshire Men Shed.

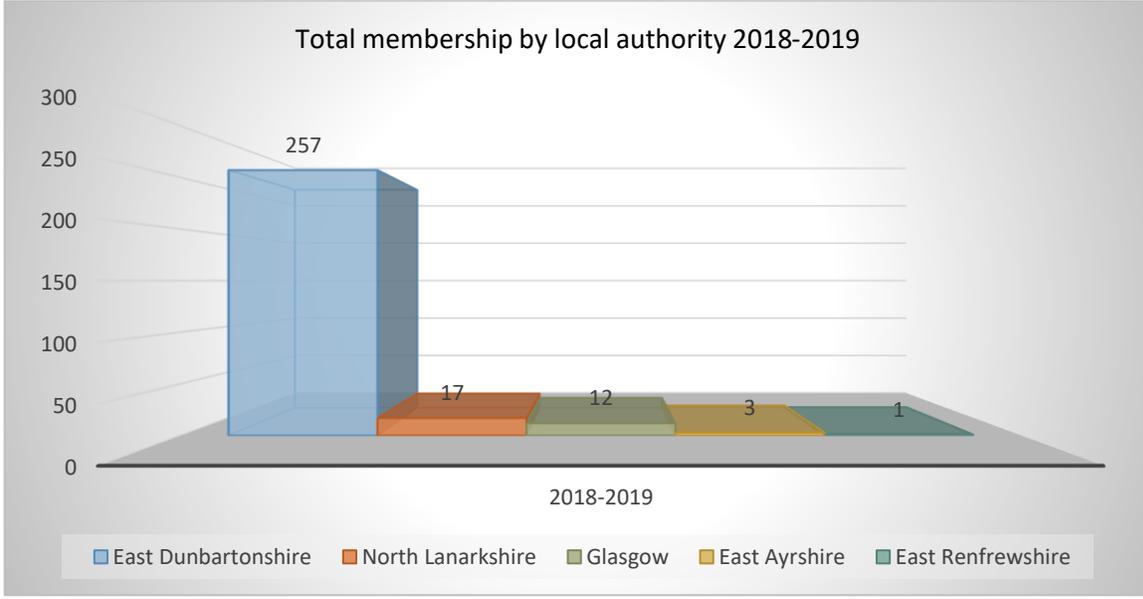


Figure 4: Total membership by local authority 2018-2019

GRACE’s main area of operation is Hillhead, situated in East Dunbartonshire Council. In 2017-2018 GRACE started to receive considerable enquiries and referrals from other local authorities, e.g.



Glasgow, North Lanarkshire, East Ayrshire, and West Dunbartonshire. GRACE's vision is to take its services to every community that can benefit from them, and with this outreach vision in mind, in 2018-2019 GRACE is putting plan and resources in place to start its outreach delivery.

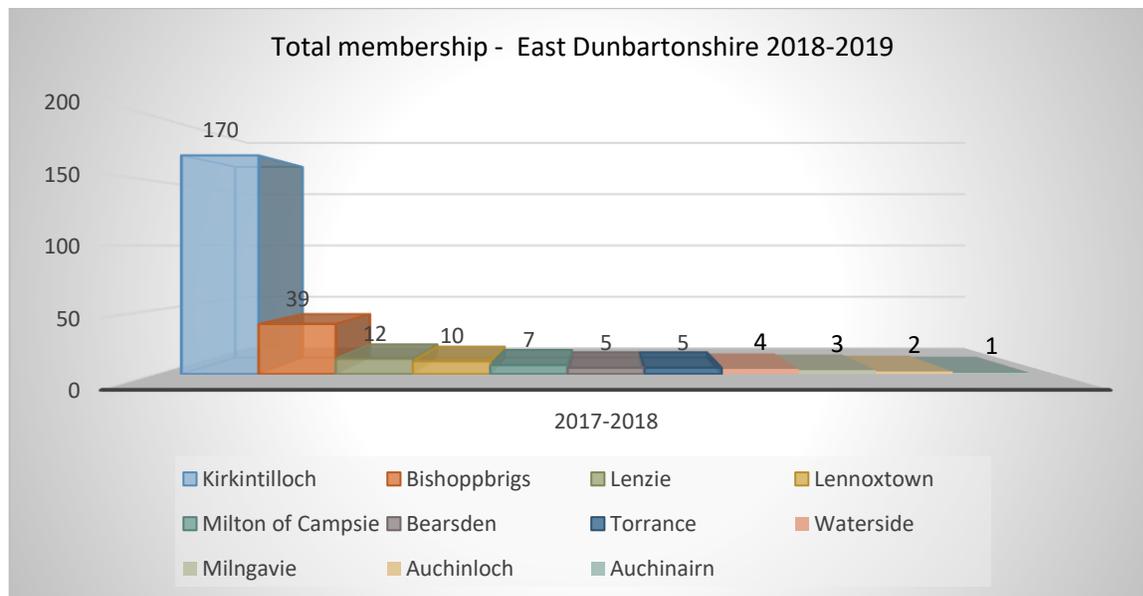


Figure 5: Total membership – East Dunbartonshire 2017-2018

GRACE's main area of operation is Hillhead, situated in Kirkintilloch. This was the birth place for GRACE, therefore, there are still strong links with the local community, with its service delivery base being solely situated at the Hillhead Community Centre. As GRACE continues its outreach strategy for 2019-2020, the membership will certainly increase in the other localities within East Dunbartonshire.

CURRENT OPERATING HOURS

GRACE operates organised activities for members 10 am to 2 pm Monday to Friday all year-round (excluding January 1st and 2nd, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Christmas Day, Boxing Day) at Hillhead Community Centre in Kirkintilloch.

Outreach is in Auchinairn Community Centre in Bishopbriggs – Mondays 10am-4pm and Thursdays 12pm – 4pm.

There is also a SMART recovery meeting each Monday evening 7pm – 9pm.

GRACE members also take part in local and national community events representing the organisation in the wider community:

- Canal Festival (Annual)
 - 18 volunteers participated in this event in 2017
- Recovery Walk (Annual)
 - 57 members and families attend the walk in Dundee 2017
- Kirkintilloch Gala (Annual)
 - 16 volunteers participated in the 2017 Gala Day



BENEFICIARIES

GRACE main beneficiaries are not limited to the membership of the group:

- Individual members
- Members family and friends
- The local community
- Volunteers

ACTIVITY BREAKDOWN

The group continues to develop a service that ensures access to a range of opportunities and services, through the close work with local and national partners. This is essential to connect with the progress made by members so they can begin to tackle poverty and social exclusion in the local community.

As a trained counsellor, Robert uses his knowledge and network contacts to facilitate activities, source external facilitators to deliver content or, where feasible, encourage members to facilitate their own sessions in line with the peer-led objectives of GRACE, the members decide on the types of activities that become part of the programme at GRACE.

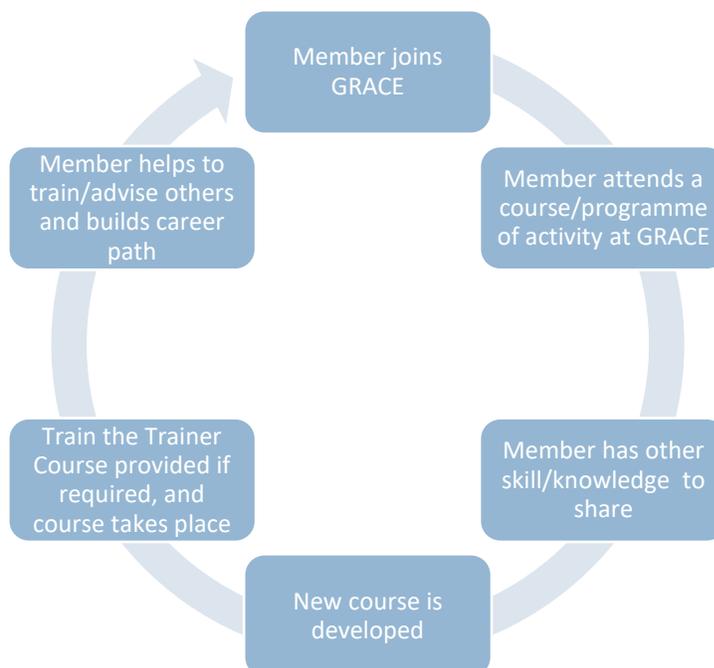




Figure 6: GRACE peer led model approach

A programme of activities has driven the delivery, including some of the following:

- Introduction to Psychology (SQA unit), Mental Health Awareness Sessions
- British Sign Language (Level 1)
- First Aid Training, Food hygiene, Health and Safety (All Externally Certified)
- Self Awareness - Wellbeing units (SQA award)
- Welfare Reform Training
- Be Healthy on a Budget
- Your Own Group Aftercare – YOGA for Mind and Body
- Money Wise
- Digital Arts Café - Digital Orchestra for Recovery and Aftercare (DORA)
- Creative Productions – Arts and Crafts
- Drama
- Serenity Gardening - Gardening Skills
- Pins and Needles

CORE AREAS OF DELIVERY

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

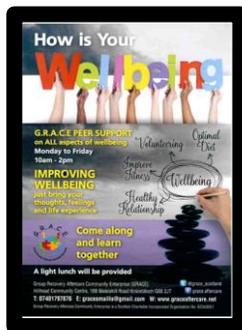
BE HEALTHY ON A BUDGET



These internally facilitated sessions aim to provide members with an improved understanding on how to eat well and keep fit on modest means. **Since the start of 2016 15 members have successfully gained a certificate of completion, and throughout the several courses delivered, a total of 80 members were recorded as attendees in at least 4 sessions. This is a key training programme in our core delivery, and was recently object of a review and report by Jennifer Urqhart from the National Health Services.**

The course aim is to increase awareness and demonstrate the practical skills required to produce healthy food, while saving money, and reducing waste, using simple measuring utensils in the production of food with no waste. This will also enhance vital budgeting skills in our most deprived communities.

WELLBEING



The majority of activities undertaken by GRACE fall in the Health and Wellbeing category. Since its inception GRACE has strived to improve the outcomes for its members and much of this relates to the health and wellbeing of themselves and others.

Average daily attendance is between 10 and 12 members, one session a week which is between 2080 to 2496 hours of support a year.

YOGA



Our gardening training programme is free, and a great way to learn more about the serenity garden, and become more actively involved in helping it grow.

PINS AND NEEDLES



The pursuit of purposeful, meaningful creative activities has been proven to have therapeutic benefits for mental and physical health and well-being.

In a survey of 695 Scottish knitters, stitchers, weavers and embroiderers by the Campaign for Creativity, more than half (53.1%) say that crafting helps alleviate stress. Nearly eight in ten (79.6%) feel relaxed and calm when knitting or sewing, and over a quarter (26.5%) say their hobby has helped them cope with anxiety. 52.9% feel uplifted and energised when they knit or sew, and a quarter (25.5%) say their craft hobby has helped them deal with depression.

For one in five (20.9%), textile crafting has aided recovery from a traumatic episode like bereavement or divorce. Craft’s therapeutic benefits are social too. Two thirds (66.9%) of Scottish textile crafters have made new friends through their hobby and half (49.4%) say crafting has helped boost their confidence. Nearly six in ten (57.0%) have joined a craft-related club. According to mental health charity MIND, one in four people experience a mental health problem each year.

SIGN LANGUAGE



These internally facilitated sessions aim to provide members with an improved understanding of Sign Language. The learning is done in a friendly, safe and joyful environment.

The group is preparing a very special activity that will see them combining sign language with other skills they have been involved within GRACE.



celebrations and activities including live bands, speakers and children’s activities.

DAISY FOUNDATION PARTNERSHIP



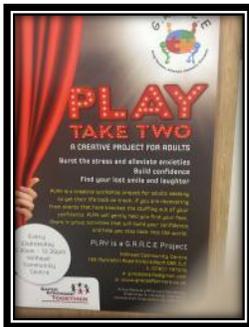
We believe all mums and babies should be supported in their own informed choices unconditionally. This is the vision of the Daisy Foundation, and one much aligned with our peer support model.

Based on these similar visions, GRACE and the Daisy Foundation have established a partnership to allow members and relatives within our communities to benefit from this outstanding therapy for both mum and baby.

Daisy Baby™ is a unique, all-inclusive combination of positive touch, movement, education, and support.

ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

PLAY DRAMA WORKSHOPS



Delivered by Rikki Traynor (experienced arts and technology consultant) the current 10-week cycle of workshops has involved participants working with language to build confidence. As well as playing word games and discussing the use of language, a book of poetry has been written by the members. This is a popular workshop with 13 members attending on average per week.

CREATIVE PRODUCTIONS



Running each Monday, these drop-in sessions are one of the most popular sessions in GRACE core delivery. The workshops encourage members to express themselves through crafts. Activities are chosen by members participating and have included:

- Adult colouring for stress relief
- Life drawing (facilitated)

Average weekly attendance is 14 members which add up to approximately 3000 hours of support provided through this project per year.

The participants are currently making a few crafts to be sold at upcoming community events:

- Decorated shopping bags
- Knitted baby clothes
- Card making



DIGITAL ARTS CAFE



Running in 10 week blocks, funding for the café has been secured for the next 2 years, making GRACE a partner in the delivery of the Digital Scotland Agenda. The café runs each Friday and helps members develop their computer skills at whatever level they access.

Areas covered have included:

- Internet security
- Power Point presentations
- Social media awareness
- DORA -Digital Orchestra for Recovery and Aftercare

12 members attend on average per week.

RECOVERY, AFTERCARE AND SAFETY

COMMUNITY SAFETY TALKS

Regular talks facilitated by EDC community safety team on the issue of staying connected and safe within the home and the community. On average 15 members attend these talks.

FIRE SAFETY TALKS

Facilitated by SFRS discussing home fire safety issues. Home fire safety visits are also arranged by SFRS for members as a part of these talks. 8 members attended and subsequently had home visits.

CANCER AWARENESS TALKS

Well-presented and informative talks by the HSPC Health Improvement Team.

RECOVERY SUPPORT

Running each Monday evening between 7pm and 9pm and facilitated by William, this is a drop-in recovery group offering both group and individual counselling. There is an average of 9 members attending these sessions every week.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

In addition to the regular sessions, workshops and courses already listed, GRACE has also collaborated with other groups within the local community to raise awareness of issues affecting the community as a whole:

- CAB – Benefits
- CEARTAS – Advocacy
- SFAAD – Scottish families affected by alcohol and drugs
- ED Library – Local heritage
- Smoking Cessation Team – Help to stop smoking
- ED Literacy Team – Literacy support for members
- EDHSCP – Health



KILTWALK



Thanks to everyone who took part in this year's Kiltwalk, Team GRACE has raised a total of £4193.40 to date.

ACTIVITIES SUMMARY

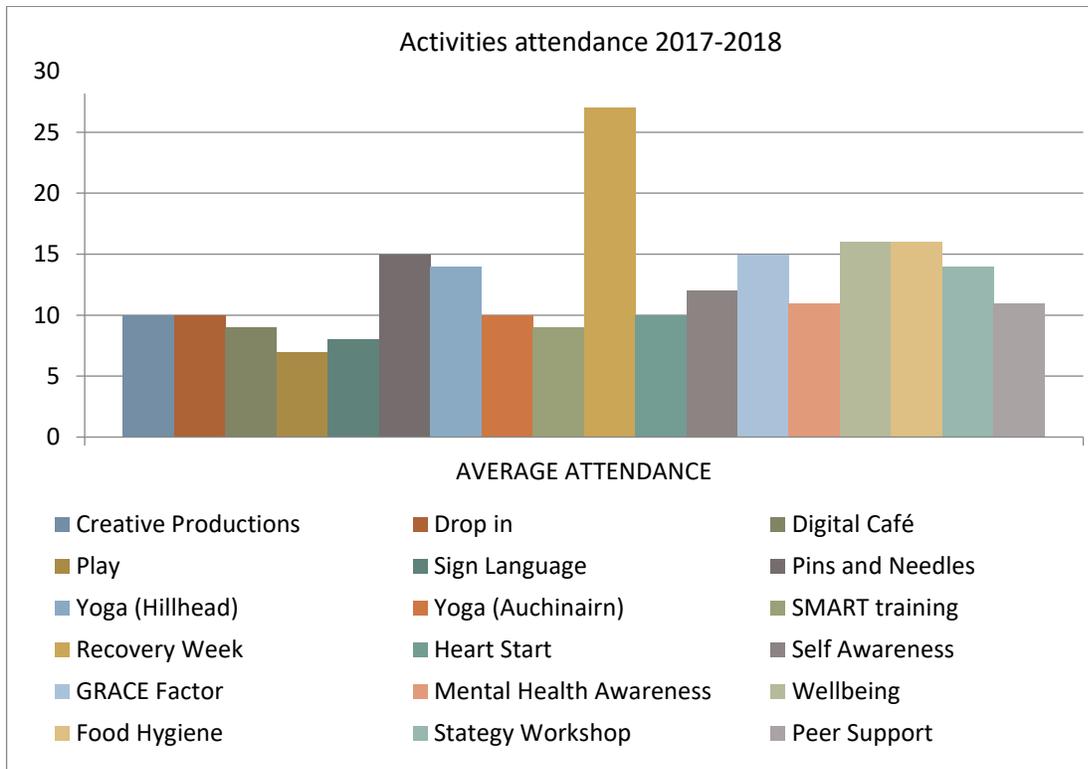


Figure 7: Activities attendance 2017-2018



In 2017-2018, GRACE has grown to provide service delivery in 2 key areas from 2016-2017. Currently 24 activities. Some of the activities were replaced by similar ones, e.g. Self-Awareness and Safe Talk by Steps to Excellence, this activity combines previous two in a more structured and effective delivery. Based on the average attendance there were 278 single engagements in Activities, a growth of over 100% when compared to 2015-16 with 129. There was an average of 12 individuals attending GRACE activities in 2015-2016, and in 2016-2017, albeit the duplication of activities, there was an average of 13. GRACE has introduced Key training courses, e.g. Be Healthy on A Budget, Health and Safety, Moods in Music, Sign Language, First Aid at Work and Paediatric First Aid. GRACE's Play and Digital Cafe are part of its core delivery and funding from Scottish Government will end December 2018. For 2017-2018, it is expected that this growth rate may decrease, but GRACE aims to increase the services it offers and the average attendance.

STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS

The group continuously builds positive working relationships with agencies and other organisations to deliver high quality services which are vital to organisational growth, and sustainability plans. GRACE has strong working relationships with the following key funders and service delivery partners:

- Scottish Government
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) – Welfare Reform Group
- East Dunbartonshire Council
 - Employability Services
 - Community and Learning Development
- East Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership
 - Alcohol and Drugs Partnership
 - Community Mental Health Team
 - Health Improvement Team
 - Social Work
- East Dunbartonshire Community Alcohol and Drugs Service (EDADS)
- East Dunbartonshire Recovery Network
- East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action
- East Dunbartonshire Citizens Advice Bureau
- Hillhead Housing Association 2000
- Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs
- Addaction
- SAMH
- Carr Gomm
- Carers Link
- The Lennox Partnership
- Glasgow Council on Alcohol
- Scottish Drugs Forum
- Recovery Life Cafe
- Addiction Recovery Centre (ARC)
- Strathkelvin Credit Union
- Police Scotland
- Strathclyde Fire Brigade
- North Lanarkshire College
- City of Glasgow College
- Scottish Council for Voluntary Action (SCVO)



- Robertson Trust
- Big Lottery
- Sainsbury's
- Tesco
- Asda



SHARING TIME

GRACE has been paving the way in the sharing of resources, knowledge and learning. We pioneered the 'Sharing Time' platform which began in March 2017, where various community organisations and statutory partners meet on a monthly basis held on the first Wednesday of each month at GRACE HQ in the East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action (EDVA) offices. Each meeting is sponsored by one of the participating organisations to use it as a platform for giving presentations and sharing new and vital information on all aspects of recovery and wellbeing, debating on how best to support the community and users we are involved with, informing on best practices at local and national level, outlining a calendar of activities to avoid duplication and allow for groups to extend their indirect offering. GRACE, at the forefront of this, plays a central role for the dissemination of information due to our large membership. During 2018/2019, 41 individual organisations and various community activists have participated in the Sharing Time meetings which have an average monthly attendance of 24. There are currently over 130 contacts on the Sharing Time mailing list.

GRACE works very closely with East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action and has its head office within their premises in an effort to minimise the impact on local third sector interface budgets relating to accommodation of projects whilst maximising our connectivity to other organisations delivering in our field. GRACE has received several referrals from them in the capacity of volunteers and members alike.

East Dunbartonshire Foodbank

Street League

East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action

Scottish Drugs Forum

GRACE

SAMH Foundry

Addaction

SAMH Sorted

East Dunbartonshire Council

Caertas

Scottish Families Affected by Drugs and Alcohol

Criminal Justice

East Dunbartonshire Alcohol and Drugs Service

National Health Service

East Dunbartonshire Recovery Community

The Lennox Partnership

Recovery Life Café

Simon Community Scotland

Families Outside

Project 101

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

EDVA Befriending

Community Safety

Glasgow Council on Alcohol

Skills for Learning, Life and Work

Health Improvement Services

Carers Link

The Social Work Department

Carr Gomm

Twechar Community Action

SMART Recovery

Department for Work and Pensions

Community Justice

Flourish House

Citizens Advice Bureau

Community Police Scotland

Health and Social Care Partnership

Eden Project

Enterprise Mentoring Wise Group

Glasgow Rape Crisis Centre

Christians Against Poverty

As a member of EDVA, GRACE hires the meeting room for £30 per month, which gives an annual cost of £360.

Each meeting requires 2 staff hours for administration and 2 staff hours for facilitation, giving an annual cost of 48 staff hours.

The cost of refreshments for the meetings is £20 pounds per month, £240 annually.

REPORTS AND FEEDBACK

DIGITAL ARTS CAFÉ AND PLAY (DIGI-PLAY)



The Need for Digital Literacy Learning Provision @ G.R.A.C.E

Our members have complex social and mental health care needs, they depend greatly upon the crucial services and support offered by a wide range of agencies, increasingly the first point of contact with such services is through digital mediums, apps and online platforms, however engaging in this way presents a problem; due to poor socioeconomic placing and the impact of life trauma many of our members have been very late in starting out on their digital learning journey, many have expressed an overwhelming anxiety with regards to 'getting online', this anxiety is compounded by the fact that access to essential DWP benefits are now for the most part accessible only through digital means.

In addition to the digital demands of service providers such as DWP we recognise the isolation and separation that digital technologies have brought to the home setting with many members struggling to engage with their children as they immerse themselves in digital mediums and online social media platforms facilitated by digital technologies such as tablets, smart phones, and computers.

In social circles and gatherings digital illiteracy creates barriers between those who are engaged and those who are not, community events, social opportunities, happenings, local news, national discussions; all more and more these are focused through, advertised, and engaged with primarily and often solely through online media platforms.

In seeking out employment and educational opportunity digital literacy skills are now recognised as essential.



Project Overview

In today's digitally driven world we forge the stories of our lives through a dizzying array of mediums: texting, snapchatting, vlogging, facebooking, skypeing, the list goes on and on and to communicate through these multiple mediums we utilise a multitude of digital hardware in the form of phones, tablets, laptops, iPads, which in turn employ a bewildering variety of software and apps.

Digi-Play is a digital literacy foundations skills learning programme, developed by G.R.A.C.E in partnership with Digital Scotland, designed to help people take their first tentative steps into world of all things digital.

Delivered over a two year period Digi-Play, utilising a creative arts workshop approach (the processes and products of which are shaped by and expressed through digital mediums, technologies and artifacts partnered with traditional creative arts approaches and mediums), will find participants better able to grasp and wield the digital pen with confidence, creativity and aplomb thus ensuring successful outcomes and achievements each and every time they engage with the digital realm.

Digi-Play is about empowerment, it is about supporting people as they strive to achieve full independence in life, it is about enabling individuals to play their part in shaping the world that is shaping them, it is about supporting people as they seek to take full charge of their life path.

Digi-Play in Delivery

With the support of Digital Scotland we delivered twice weekly creative arts and learning workshops throughout 2018 and into 2019:

Play

Play is a creative arts workshop focused through drama, spoken word, and creative writing.

Digital technology is used to research, document, & present works created by the group in digital forms and mediums and to support live performance

Play has a regular monthly attendance of 52 members

Example

Digitally Speaking

Created over a fifteen week period Digitally Speaking is a digital collection of original written prose and poetry

Process

For the purpose of this report we will focus on digital literacy learning processes and opportunities incorporated into the drama and creative writing practice.

Digitally Speaking was created through sourcing, downloading, installation and utilisation of apps and software



Original writings, prose and poetry were created through traditional drama and creative writing workshop practice. Works were documented utilising laptops and iPads. Works were shared through the use of Gmail, Google Docs, and Google Drive

Participants created unique folders and accounts to host and share their work

Exercises were delivered to participants using traditional workshop methods in tandem with digital resources, files being shared via attachments to Gmail or through folders containing work shared through Google Docs

Research of creative writing and drama related topics was undertaken utilising online resources such as 'Google Images' 'Wikipedia' & 'YouTube'

G.R.A.C.E. Digital Café

G.R.A.C.E Digital Café is our primary educational resource for digital literacy and learning and online access for G.R.A.C.E. members. G.R.A.C.E Digital Café utilises innovative, novel and unique creative mediums, methodologies and practises to facilitate digital literacy attainment

G.R.A.C.E Digital Café has an average monthly attendance of 47 members; the café is also a drop in digital help resource for many other members, with up to 35 drop-ins attending each month

Example

Radio Grace

Created over a ten week period Radio Grace is an audio work that captures a snippet of a fictional radio station broadcast featuring news bulletins, presenters banter, sports revues and so much more...

Process

Before work could begin on Radio Grace, members were fully involved in a ten week preparatory workshop process preparing G.R.A.C.E Digital Café Audio Visual Studio resource for production:

Participants were fully involved in this process. The skills learnt are fully transferable to the installation and use of any app, software programme, and or related hardware and technologies. Here are some of the processes engaged with under the guidance of our facilitators

Online registration of hardware such as our Zoom U-24 Audio Interfaces.

Registration of hardware involved creating Gmail accounts and linking with a number of manufacturer's websites and engaging with their unique product registration methods.

Following registration of products members were fully involved in sourcing, downloading, and installing relevant manuals, firmware, and drivers for operation of products.

Online registration and licensing of Software such as Ableton Live utilised in audio recording, production, and sound design. Registration and licensing of software involved linking licenses from various hardware manufactures to software developers such as Ableton.

Software was installed and integrated with audio recording interfaces and midi controllers taking participants deep into the digital realm of setting preferences and options that work behind the scenes on our laptops and iPads keeping all equipment, software and related drivers functioning smoothly.



This process afforded us a great many opportunities to explore a wide range of digital topics such as those related to buying products online, how to research items and utilise customer reviews and online tutorials and demonstrations, how to recognise and employ safe practices for buying online. We also developed good computer housekeeping practices with regards to storing files and artefacts and how to share these between members using online platforms and mediums. We also explored using products such as **Malwarebytes** to ensure our digital safety.

In creating Radio Grace, performance and creative writing practices were carried over from our creative writing and drama workshops. Storyboards were created to develop the content of the captured broadcast. Vocal delivery was explored to facilitate the delivery of spoken content.

Online resources were used to source relevant samples and Foley, working folders were created and file naming and use of file and folder structures explored to facilitate best working practices in the creation and curation of creative digital content and related documentation.

Our partnership with our guest facilitators continued through and on into 2018 with each assisting in the development and delivery of G.R.A.C.E 48 Hour Challenge Short Film Festival and our end of year multi-media exhibition DigitallyArtistic 2018.

G.R.A.C.E 48 2018

Supported by additional funding from East Dunbartonshire Council and as part of Glasgow 2018 European Championship Festival, G.R.A.C.E. invited partner organisations from across East Dunbartonshire to take part in a 48 hour film making challenge with digital literacy skills and technology learning opportunities at its core.

The brief: For each group to devise, script, film, underscore, and edit a short film either fictional or documentarian over a two day period. The entirety of the filming, underscoring, and editing is to be done on iPad Pro's and personal devices.

A total of seven community groups took up the challenge and in July 2018 G.R.A.C.E. facilitated a two day workshop programme followed by a film festival screening day at Kirkintilloch Town Hall.



G.R.A.C.E 48 2018 Outcomes (extract from Community Fund Monitoring Report to EDC Ian Bustard)

Who benefited and what sustained impact was achieved

A number of groups and individuals benefited from the event. Groups that were involved included:

GRACE Hillhead

GRACE Auchinairn

AddAction

CEARTAS

The Lennox Partnership

Fair Start Scotland (EDC Employability Team)



Kirkintilloch Pipe Band

Each of the groups learned a huge range of skills that will help them to create their own individual films for their organisations in the future. The event also brought the community together and encouraged people to work collectively. All involved overcame barriers with technology and there was a real empowerment of all involved to continue their learning and digital skills development.

What difference did you make

Over two days we created 9 short films to a very high standard. The film workshop/festival made a difference by giving people the opportunity to develop their digital literacy skills set in addition to building soft skills relating to personal development and social interaction, and promoting confidence in stepping into community engagement. Many of the participants had a fear of technology and a lack of confidence in using it. The project made a huge difference by encouraging a sense of play towards technology taking away the fear factor. The project also made a difference by enhancing the skills base of the organisations involved. They now have the skills to produce, shoot and edit their own work and then go on to share that work through online social media platforms.

Lessons Learned

The groups learned digital skills and how to use digital software for personal endeavour and group led activity. They learned camera skills and basic editing skills. They also learned storytelling techniques and basic script writing. As the workshop went on all involved demonstrated a huge growth in confidence and team building skills. The participants performed, acted, presented and did their own voice overs and many involved were pleasantly surprised by how creative they can be. There was a huge sense of achievement in producing the final films and the participants learned a lot about overcoming technical and personal barriers.

In Conclusion

G.R.A.C.E 48 2018 was a phenomenal achievement bringing together a diverse group of people from a wide range of backgrounds and spanning across the age range from young to old, child to adult.

It strengthened working relationships and partnerships between G.R.A.C.E and partner agencies and community groups.

It demonstrated clearly that digital skills literacy training can be delivered through and enhanced by a creative arts approach.



VISUAL ARTS/CREATIVE PRODUCTIONS

Digital Scotland visual art report 2018 second block

The visual art workshops ran for 10 weeks one day a week for 4 hours per session

The aim of this series of workshops.

To engage participants in block printing, drawing & painting The Workshops all had a structure that focus' on method, technique & practice, With a beginning, middle & end. Concentrating on the importance of individuals realising, valuing & appreciating their own learning path. This aspect was pivotal to the project delivered. This re-enforced participants confidence through a series of learning development processes. The workshops subtly underpinned & re-enforced that the skills developed throughout, lend themselves to help participants cope in a positive way to every day challenges faced in life. Workshops were accessible to all levels, this was with the aim of encouraging peer driven support, alongside the support of a visual art practitioner.

Developed art skills - Drawing & mark making, painting, different printing processes, mixed media techniques, use of technology within art. (used to develop ideas and for research purposes)

Outcomes - Research techniques, Development in an understanding of the value of mark making and drawing. Putting creative ideas into practice, Colour theory, Exploring a wide range of art materials and art practice, An understanding how to develop conceptual ideas, An understanding of aesthetics. Concluding an idea to fruition by way of understanding the importance of how best to present your work. (whether that be publicly or privately). Picture mounting, framing, preparation of project In the form of exhibition/show/event.

Additional skills development - Flexibility & Adaptability, Appreciation of self and others, Communication & articulation, Extended creativity, Critical analysis of situations/ideas and Research skills, Organisational, Patience, Presentation & public speaking, Self discipline, Time management

Quotes documented throughout project

"I never thought I was capable of making so many new things"

"I am so proud of myself"

"I can't wait to show this to my family"

"Creativity makes you feel good about yourself"

"I can't draw"

"I'm not creative at all"

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" Last time I did this kind of stuff I was a kid".

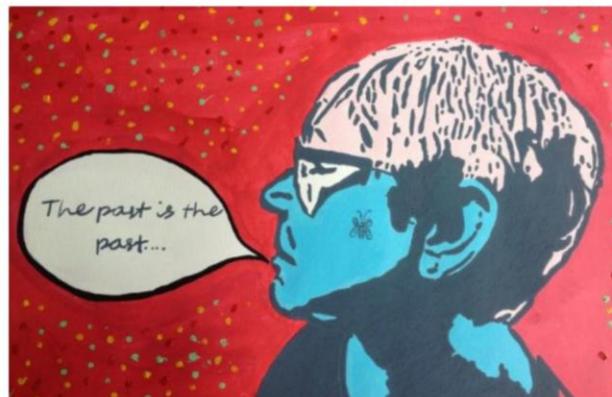
As a result of this negative conditioning early on in their lives I realised that people can feel embarrassed & inhibited about even considering to unleash their creative side. Luckily I believe otherwise, everyone has creativity / a creative impulse. I also fully appreciate what it can take for people to come to any workshop. It is a massive step.....

Drawing & painting



Bringing art and technology together in the form of Techno-Pop Art

These paintings are Pop art inspired and the group went through a series of digital technology processes to form a body of research, in preparation for their painting. This all evolved around the use of the iPad. Developing an understanding of – researching artists on the web, photography, photo editing, importing, exporting, saving files and having a safe online record of research (on line sketch book). This playful approach in the partnership of technology and art was not only fun to do, it also allows people to really explore technology, without the fear of making mistakes or getting things wrong. There is no such thing in this context. This in turn gives a level of empowerment for participants, the feeling of having some control over your digital literacy development.





exploring creative process & method



Exhibition 2018





DOMINO TOURNAMENT

Held between GRACE and the Addaction ARBD Lunch Club, the tournament was a great success with two teams of ten battling for the coveted trophies. Addaction won the individual events, with GRACE taking the overall trophy. All involved enjoyed the event immensely and interest was shown for the tournament to be held again next year.





PILOT PROJECT OF MASSAGE TREATMENTS



Judith Gaertner (Judiththerapy) took part in a pilot project, offering massage treatments to members of G.R.A.C.E. throughout February 2018. The treatments lasted about 40 Minutes each and participants also had time to talk about how they felt before and after the treatment.

7 members received treatments, of whom 3 received 2 treatments, 4 received one.

An evaluation questionnaire was given to participants after they completed their treatments.

Evaluation Outcomes:

- All people reported a reduction of stress levels, tension and an immediate improvement in their overall wellbeing.
- The benefits lasted up to a whole week after treatment.
- All participants would like **more** treatments and some would even be prepared to financially contribute.

A questionnaire was passed to all members of G.R.A.C.E. asking them if they are interested in receiving massage treatments.

- 18 people (the above 7 members **not** included) would like this service to be offered to them on a regular basis.

Quotes

Client 1: "The therapy felt good!"

"The main benefit of the treatment was that I was feeling totally relaxed".

Client 2: Main Benefits were: "reduction of tension"; "experience of energy shifting in my body"; "a feeling of total relaxation".



Client 3: “felt amazing, relaxed, no stress, lovely smell of oil, music, my muscles relaxed”.

Client 4: “it was very relaxing” main benefits: “reduced stress and relaxing”.

Client 5: “The experience was therapeutic, helped me with dealing with my emotions in relation to an event in my life”; “Treatments helped long term”; “Healed”; “I can now talk about a certain topic, I can see it in a positive light”.

Client 6: Main benefits of treatment were: “1. reduction of pain, 2. relaxation, 3. reduction of stress and tension. The second and third benefits lasted over a whole week”.

Conclusion

Those G.R.A.C.E. service users, who took part in this pilot, despite being shy about the idea at first, now realise that massage can have a significant benefit on their overall health and Wellbeing.

Combined with talking about challenges they face, life style choices, developing plans to make small changes, joining other activities offered by G.R.A.C.E. and the wider community, this service could potentially become an integral part of supporting people towards their aim to be healthy, happy and confident individuals.

I, Judith Gaertner, am very grateful for having had the privilege of being asked to lead the massage pilot. I very much enjoyed working with members of G.R.A.C.E. I was amazed by their positive feedback and I would love to continue working with the organisation.



DIGITAL SCOTLAND VISUAL ART WORKSHOPS

Facilitated by Rachel Toner

The visual art workshops ran for 10 weeks one day a week for 4 hours per session.

The aim of this series of workshops

To engage participants in block printing, drawing & painting The Workshops all had a structure that focus' on method, technique & practice, With a beginning, middle & end. Concentrating on the importance of individuals realising, valuing & appreciating their own learning path. This aspect was pivotal to the project delivered. This re-enforced participants confidence through a series of learning development processes. The workshops subtly underpinned & re-enforced that the skills developed throughout, lend themselves to help participants cope in a positive way to every day challenges faced in life. Workshops were accessible to all levels, this was with the aim of encouraging peer driven support, alongside the support of a visual art practitioner.

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MIND AND BODY YOGA



Following receiving funding from Big Lottery Awards for All GRACE and SFAD held joint yoga and relaxation classes for those in the community who due to financial or social barriers would not be able to access a mainstream class, aimed at those who are recovering from past trauma, including those affected by a loved one's substance misuse.

The overall aim of the course was to help people develop a better understanding of and tools to manage of their own experiences and mental health. The course was led by Catriona Jinks, a fully qualified yoga instructor. In recent weeks Catriona has been on maternity leave so the classes have been covered by Liz McVey, a student teacher of Dru Yoga.

To reach as many people across East Dunbartonshire as possible the classes were held in two locations, Hillhead and Auchinairn. Hillhead had an average of 15 attending each class. Auchinairn was initially less popular, with only an average of four people attending each class. The venue was changed in order to attract new attendees and the class now has an average of 12 attending each class.

The sessions ran in 8 week blocks covering four key areas

Discussions mental health awareness and how to manage well-being

Discussions and learning on how breathing can be used as a tool to manage stress and demonstration and practice of breathing exercises.

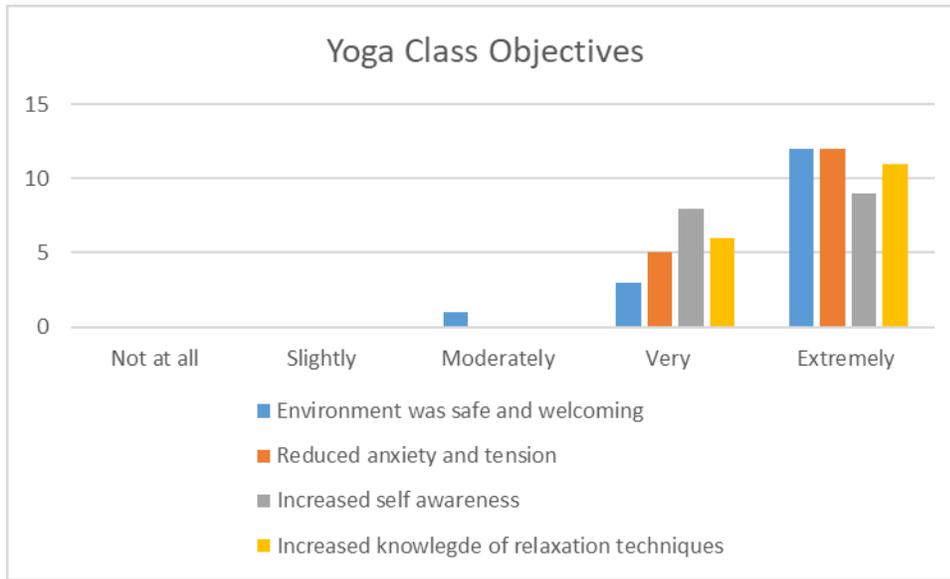
Trying out yoga poses and being aware of what muscles are being active.

An introduction to mindfulness and skills to develop mindful practice.

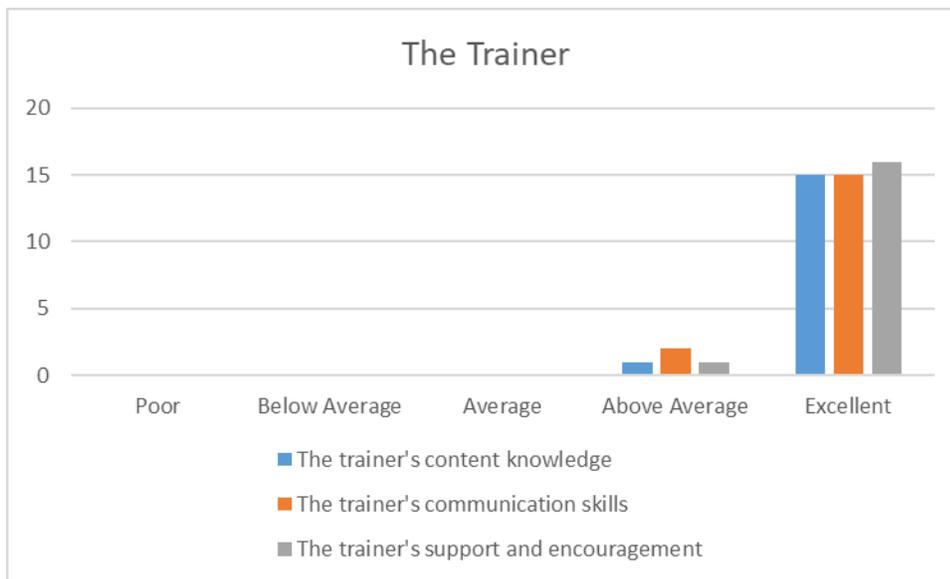
Attendees were asked to feedback on classes by filling out questionnaires at the end of the 8 week blocks and by having opportunity to feedback by writing quotes at the end of each class. Not everyone wanted to give feedback, over the course of three 8 week blocks 17 unique questionnaires were completed.



When asked if the four core objectives of the yoga classes were being met attendees responded



When asked to rate the skills of the teacher the attendees responded



81% of attendees rated their overall experience of attending the classes as excellent.

Quotes from those who attended the classes

On improving relationships with body and increased awareness of physical symptoms of stress and tension.

"Breathing helped when I get out of breath."

"Breathing techniques to reduce anxiety."



"I have found it very helpful and now I just sit and relax when I feel things are getting me down."

On reduction in tension and physical symptoms of stress.

"I have learned to stand correctly and I am more balanced and focused on what I am doing. If I am stressed I do breathing exercises and this calms me down."

"Find a difference in wellbeing and flexibility."

On relaxation

"I make a little more time to relax, take time as often as I can to practice the yoga positions and relaxation techniques to improve my physical and mental wellbeing."

"I feel better after the class, more relaxed, me time. I think it relaxes my mind too."

"Brings me back to myself and reminds me calmness exists."

On building resilience

"Will put these exercises into my week and definitely continue working on breathing techniques which have helped me a lot dealing with stress and life!"

"Talks at the end help open people up"

"Stress free. More balanced. Best hour of the week."

MENTAL HEALTH/WELLBEING WORKSHOPS

This year trainee counsellors from ACT Counselling and CBT Services volunteered to facilitate four two-hourly Psycho-Education Workshops for GRACE in the Hillhead Community Centre in Kirkintilloch and the Auchinairn Community Centre in Bishopbriggs. Their aim was to raise awareness and offer information and self-help tips on four different common mental health issues: Depression, Generalised Anxiety Disorder, Addictions and Phobias/Panic Attacks.

CBT is a psycho-social intervention that is the most widely used evidence-based practice for improving mental health. It is used for a number of mood disorders, such as stress, anxiety, phobias, aggression and low self-esteem. The CBT model is based on the combination of basic principles from behavioural and cognitive psychology. It is a 'problem-focused' and 'action-oriented' form of therapy, as it is used to treat specific problems related to a mental disorder. It is based on the belief that thought distortions and maladaptive behaviours play a role in the development and maintenance of psychological disorders. Symptoms and associated distress can be reduced by teaching new information-processing skills and coping mechanisms. When compared to psychoactive medications, review studies have found CBT alone to be as effective for treating less severe forms of depression and anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), tics, eating disorders and borderline personality disorder.

GRACE (Group Recovery Aftercare Community Enterprise) is a local organisation that manages two groups in East Dunbartonshire and provides aftercare for people who have completed, or almost completed, a recovery programme from addiction to alcohol, drugs or gambling, Mental Health issues, homeless problems and other life trauma. The group provides facilities for learning, training, health

and well-being activities, enabling its members to become positive and useful for themselves, their families and community. Each member will also encourage other members to engage in training or volunteering which may lead to employment through an increase in their confidence and skills.

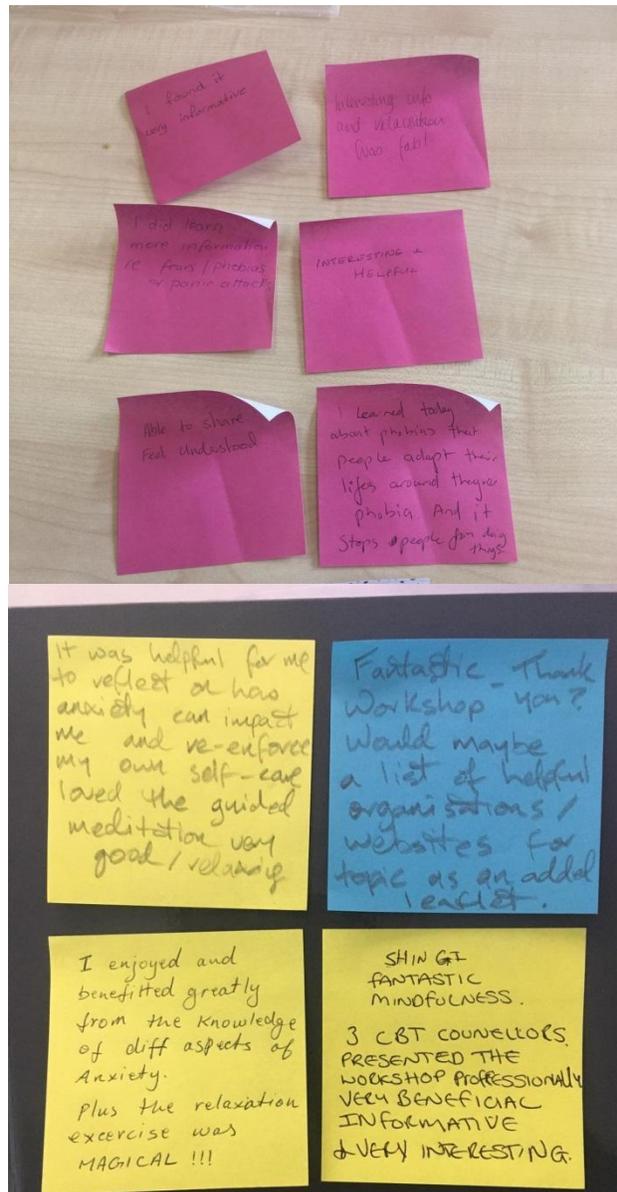
Groups in general can be taken to include any helping process that takes place in a small or larger number of people who have gathered together, such as support groups, skills training groups (i.e. anger management, relaxation training or social skills training), and psychoeducation groups.

Psychoeducation is an evidence-based therapeutic intervention that provides information and support to patients and their loved ones, to better understand and cope with illness. Psychoeducation is often associated with serious mental illness, including dementia, schizophrenia, clinical depression, anxiety disorders, psychotic illnesses, eating disorders and personality disorders, although the term has also been used for programs that address physical illnesses, such as cancer. Psychoeducation offered to patients and family members teaches problem-solving and communication skills and provides education and resources in an empathetic and supportive environment. Results from more than 30 studies indicate psychoeducation improves family well-being, lowers rates of relapse and improves recovery.

Therefore, the four sessions aimed to combine a CBT approach with the group dynamics and deliver psychoeducation which was meant to educate participants in identifying personal coping strategies that target solving current problems and possible unhelpful patterns in cognitions (e.g. thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes), behaviours and emotional regulation. All facilitators encouraged group participation up to the point where participants felt safe to share thoughts and past experiences, following at all times the group and counselling guidelines in regards to confidentiality. At the end of each session people appeared to have gained a feel-good sense and optimism.

Feedback

Feedback was collected at the end of each session by asking participants to fill in a form rating on a scale from 1-5 if they had found it useful, interesting, informative and enjoyable. In every sheet, no exceptions, people gave either 4 (slightly agree) or 5 (strongly agree) for all elements (usefulness, interest, information and pleasure). They were also given coloured stickers to write comments and suggestions. Their feedback was very enthusiastic in almost all cases. Further workshops are being arranged as





participants have asked for more psycho-education sessions on a number of topics of their interest such as:

- Self-harm
- Dementia
- Eating problems /disorders
- Grief / bereavement
- Building self-esteem
- anxiety / social anxiety / more on anxiety
- CBT / talk about treatments

The number of participants remained high on every session (between 12 and 21) and conversation was vivid at all times. In their comments people appeared to ask for more information and appreciated the new knowledge gained. After the end of each session, some of the participants approached the counsellors to discuss issues to their personal interest. Overall they described these sessions as a positive experience and asked for more in the future.

On behalf of the team of counsellors

Maria (Mirka) Polychronaki



SCIROCCO VISIT TO HILLHEAD

G.R.A.C.E. is a community aftercare service which gives peer support in a non-judgemental way to anyone who has become socially isolated. One of their projects which uses community inspired digital creativity to make films has attracted international attention. Members write the script, direct, produce and edit short films. These are shared with the community at events like the recent G.R.A.C.E. Film Festival held in Kirkintilloch Town Hall in July.

SCIROCCO, an international project, heard about the good things G.R.A.C.E. is doing and came along to Hillhead Community Centre in Kirkintilloch for a study visit to see for themselves how G.R.A.C.E. helps people to become more confident and improve their mental health using digital technology.

Robert Smith, CEO, said “This is a milestone for East Dunbartonshire. A consortium for Integrated Care found that studying the G.R.A.C.E. model would be beneficial to international health bodies. G.R.A.C.E. involves its members in everything we do. We are real people who have real experience of the problems that life can throw at us all. For some people using computers and digital technology is difficult because they have never been shown how to do it. But more and more public services are only available online. G.R.A.C.E. activities help people take digital control and become confident computer users to access these services. This improves their health and well-being.”

SCIROCCO (Scaling Integrated Care in Context Twinning and Coaching) includes members from NHS 24, Italy and Spain. Leading the visit was Dr Andrea Pavlickovap, International Engagement Manager Technology Enabled Care and Digital Healthcare Innovation NHS National Services Scotland. They wanted to learn how G.R.A.C.E. delivers improved mental health and digital literacy through a creative arts approach.

Cllr Susan Murray for Kirkintilloch N & E and Twechar commented “I am impressed that a local voluntary organisation like G.R.A.C.E. can attract international attention and is recognised as a model of good practice. This shows how the community can teach the professionals and plays an important role in our well-being by providing local solutions to local issues.

<https://www.scirocco-project.eu/about/>

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/GRACE.Aftercare/>

<https://graceaftercare.net/>

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/gracedigitalcafe/>



MEMBERS

As part of GRACE's peer led objective participants are encouraged to provide feedback on any activities they take part in. Some examples of feedback given over the last year:

GRACE (sic)...

"has given me more confidence"

"has opened up my mind to options available"

"has definitely been a positive experience, meeting new people, dealing with challenging situations, opening my eyes to the bigger picture"

"doing courses, I wouldn't normally consider before"



Volunteering

"Volunteering has given me the confidence to think about getting back to work"

"my self-esteem has come on leaps and bounds"

"doing stuff now I never thought I could"

"it's brilliant to be able to give something back"



Creative Productions

"didn't think I could draw or paint"

"I can't remember the last time I did anything like this"

"I've found my creative side"

"we really enjoyed getting messy with paint and glue"



CASE STUDIES

CASE 1

'Jean' is a lady in her fifties. She didn't have a happy childhood and had what she describes as a terrible relationship with her mother who was controlling. She was constantly in trouble at school and was asked to leave with no qualifications at age 16. Eventually she decided that the only way out was to marry, which she did at 21. Jean's husband was abusive and also controlling. She gave birth to her first child very soon after the marriage and this made her feel very isolated. When her second child was born she says she didn't feel anything and thought she was going mad. She went to her GP and told him she was going to kill herself and the children, as she didn't want to leave them alone. She was taken into hospital for six months and given electroconvulsive therapy, and support from Psychiatric Services once she was home.

Still being treated at home for depression, Jean again became pregnant, this time with twins. One twin sadly died and the other was poorly in hospital for four months. When her youngest was around five years old she spent four months in a psychiatric ward, a further five months a year later and six months a couple of years after that.

Her husband left when the youngest was ten and this increased her worries over money, possible homelessness and the effect on the children. The eldest was angry and was drinking heavily. The youngest also had anger issues and had started stealing before being expelled from school for smoking marijuana. Jean became more isolated as she found being single made her less likely to be included in things or invited out. She did see her community psychiatric nurse and the crisis team but she was spending most of her time in bed. She tried to kill herself and ended up in casualty several times. Then, about four years ago, she started to self-harm. It was around this time that her CPN told her about GRACE and she agreed to give it a try.

One of Jean's support workers had to accompany her to GRACE as she didn't have the confidence to go by herself. She was paranoid and wouldn't speak or make eye contact with anyone. She couldn't bring herself to walk into a room or take a bus alone.

The effect of GRACE was a revelation to Jean. For the first time in years she had a place where she felt accepted and didn't have to put on a brave face. "GRACE gave me a better life" she says, "I have a reason to go out the door. GRACE made me realise I'm responsible for my own recovery, I need professional help but I also need peer support from GRACE".

Jean has taken part in many activities and courses during her time with GRACE and, as a result, her family life has improved and her social circle has improved. "I'm going out every day, I'm feeling physically better and more motivated and I have more energy" she says. "I even walked 23 miles in the Kiltwalk to help raise money for GRACE." And the benefits have been more than physical. "It's given me a desire to learn and put myself forward to try new things" she says, "and I'm focusing on positives rather than negatives as I was doing before". Volunteering with GRACE has led to other major changes for Jean. She has become more aware of others' needs in social situations and more confident in listening to others and directing them to appropriate help. As a result of this new confidence Jean is now volunteering as Development Officer for the new group in Auchinairn. This involves assessing the needs of the new area, establishing and promoting the new group and networking with other groups, welcoming and supporting new members and representing GRACE at meetings and conferences. "I



would never have believed I would be doing this” she says, “It’s great to have something to talk about when you come home, and It feels like there’s so much more to come”.

CASE 2

Jack is in his late thirties and joined GRACE around three years ago. He was alcohol dependent and had been going to a psychiatrist since he was 17 for mental health problems. With nothing to do with his time except drinking and sleeping the day away his confidence was extremely low. He saw a community psychiatric nurse every four weeks and was prescribed anti-psychotics and anti-depressants.

Jack heard about GRACE from the occupational therapy team at Kirkintilloch Health and Care Centre, and they brought him down and introduced him. At first Jack wasn’t sure about GRACE, he was shy and nervous, but he gave it a try. At first it didn’t help much as he didn’t stay for the entire four hour sessions, but he spoke to a facilitator and, within a month, had decided to attend on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday each week.

During the first year Jack stopped coming to GRACE for about a month and unfortunately relapsed, ending up in hospital for three and a half weeks. The staff in the hospital knew Jack from previous stays and, even though he had relapsed, noticed a significant change in his attitude. He told them about GRACE. Once discharged, Jack attended GRACE every week without fail and hasn’t been back in hospital since.

After a few months with GRACE, Jack became a volunteer. He loved helping people in similar situations to himself and gave several presentations on mental health to his fellow members, using his own experience. The mental health team at the health centre asked him to give a presentation about GRACE to their staff and he also went back to the hospital he had been in to give a talk on GRACE to staff and patients. His most terrifying and satisfying presentation was representing GRACE in front of 400 people at a recovery based meeting in Glasgow. This all led to him being given the Volunteer of the Year Award, of which he was very proud.

Jack says “I understand things better now and I look at life in a different way. I’ve learned to say no and take some time for myself. I can stick up for myself now and I don’t let folk walk all over me”. He wants to continue volunteering, and possibly begin SMART facilitator training to be able to help more people. “I would love GRACE to be able to do more training” he says, “If you want your self-confidence back, and you want support to try new things, then GRACE can help. I love to tell people my story and to inspire them. I have brought new people here and they have been helped by GRACE too”.

CASE 3

‘Jane’ was a professional lady in her early sixties when she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. This began an extremely traumatic period in her life. Her ill health forced her to leave work, which consequently left her feeling isolated and depressed. She tried attending an MS group but it had a very negative effect on her. She was left with a painful insight into her future which, she says, was not what she needed at that time.

Two years ago a close friend told her about GRACE, that it was a peer run group full of individuals with unique personalities. “Come along and have a cuppa” she encouraged, “everyone who attends has some kind of challenge to face”.



Jane began attending GRACE and says she was welcomed with open arms. In this new environment she found she was able to both give and find support. Soon she was joining in with activities and learning new skills, including achieving 'Health and Safety' and 'Pediatric First Aid' certificates. She has also engaged in facilitator training and now shares her knowledge of first aid and signing with other members in some of the many workshops that GRACE has to offer. "Once again" she says "I began to feel human and have a purpose for each day. It's great to know that I am known as Jane from GRACE and not Jane with MS. Being with my friends from GRACE, where I am treated as me, is wonderful."

Jane continues to make friends and try new things through GRACE, enjoying her increased wellbeing. She says she is happy and fulfilled and looks forward to the future. She wants people to know "how important it is not to be labelled, and just to be an individual who has had some type of trauma and been helped by friends who understand".

CASE 4

'Jim' is in his thirties and had started using cannabis at the age of 13. He started experimenting, thinking all drugs could be picked up and dropped easily, and by 17 he was addicted to heroin. This led to him getting into trouble and from 19 to 24 he spent his time in and out of jail. By age 24 he had decided that enough was enough, and with the help of the Community Addiction Team (CAT) and the East Dunbartonshire Alcohol and Drugs Service (EDADS) he began a methadone maintenance programme.

Unfortunately, once the daily heroin use had stopped, Jim started replacing it with alcohol. This carried on until two years ago, when his EDADS worker mentioned that GRACE might be able to provide some of the things that had been missing from his life. Jim recalls "I thought I would give it a try, anything was better than nothing. I needed help and support – someone to talk to".

After being welcomed into GRACE, Jim started to see a light at the end of the tunnel and made a real and honest decision to stop drinking. Jim described what followed as "three weeks of solid hell and paranoia coming off the drink". He received good advice and one to one support from GRACE members, some of whom had been through similar situations. Jim has now been clean and sober for six months and he says it is all down to GRACE for being there for him. "If it wasn't for GRACE I don't know if I would have been able to do it" he says.

Jim has been involved in a variety of activities since attending GRACE, including art and drama and learning sign language and computing. He says "It fills a lot of my time because sometimes sitting in your own company is not the best place to be. Peer support really helps and I've learned a lot". Jim's goal is to remain clean and sober and to get rid of the last stumbling block, the methadone. When asked about the future Jim says "I want to continue to stick with GRACE and come off the methadone. The future looks bright".

CASE 5

'John' is a young man in his early twenties. He suffered from trauma caused by bullying at school and, as a result, had been prescribed antidepressants. John had been out of work for four years when someone at Job Centre Plus recommended GRACE and, in January of last year, he began his journey and became a member a few weeks later.

John's mother described him at this time, saying "He literally would not raise his head, give eye contact or interact with anyone outside his home. He was depressed and moody, with no confidence at all".



When asked in his first personal development form what he hoped to gain from being a member of GRACE, he said “I hope my confidence will improve. I think that the chance to talk with others will help my self-esteem”. He also indicated that he would like to learn IT skills as they would be useful when applying for jobs.

John initially started by going to GRACE Factor and the Digital Café but quickly added Creative Productions, Gardening and Play, which meant that he was often attending GRACE five days a week. This fulfilled his wish to increase his digital literacy while opening up a world of creative possibilities for him. Later he challenged himself further by joining the ‘British Sign Language’ and ‘Be Healthy on a Budget’ courses, giving him broader lifelong skills and setting him on the road to complete independence. During this time John has gone from rating himself five or six out of ten in the personal development forms for self-esteem, confidence to contribute, social interaction and skills, to eights and nines.

Outside of GRACE John now feels able to engage in social functions and volunteer at church. He is happier and feels his life is going well. Since honing his job application skills at the Digital Café he has managed to find paid work and has successfully sustained this for some months. Although very busy, he still finds the time to pop in and see his friends in GRACE.

CASE 6

‘Joy’ is in her fifties and was having panic attacks and refusing to communicate with people. She only went out when she had to, or when her husband took her out in the car. She was looking for voluntary work when she met a lady from East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action in the job centre. She told Joy about the Pins and Needles craft group held in GRACE on a Tuesday and offered to take her there.

The group were friendly and welcomed Joy with smiling faces. Later, when she spoke with the facilitator, she was tearful. “I only realised after coming to GRACE that I had problems” she says.

Joy tried coming to drama on a Wednesday but couldn’t keep up with it as she was afraid to perform in front of other people. She continued to attend on Tuesdays and gradually felt able to come back to drama. After further work on her self-esteem, Joy found herself starring in the short film that GRACE had produced for the local film festival held in the town hall. Joy’s family came to see it and she was nervous but proud.

Once she had started to spread her wings, Joy was unstoppable. She signed up for several workshops held on Thursdays, Food and Hygiene, Be Healthy on a Budget, and sign language which she enjoyed very much. Through GRACEs contacts Joy has started to study British Sign Language part time at college and has a more advanced course already in place for when she finishes this one. “GRACE has given me control over myself and my life” she says, “I can cope with situations better, it’s given me new friends and very good peer support. I felt lost before I came to GRACE. If it wasn’t for GRACE I would be sitting afraid in the house watching soaps all day”.

CASE 7

‘Jess’ is a lady in her sixties who lives with one of her two grown up daughters. As an only child she had a very difficult relationship with her own mother who had been ill throughout Jess’ childhood with no diagnosis. Jess and her mother were complete opposites. She was extremely demanding and Jess felt as though it was her mother’s way or no way. At one point they didn’t speak for two years. Around six years ago Jess’ mother was finally diagnosed with motor neuron disease and deteriorated quite quickly.



Jess was childminding at this time and had to cut back her hours to travel to her mother's house, shop for her and care for her. When her mother required a wheelchair and became housebound she was moved into sheltered housing and then into care, but she was not happy and had to be rehoused several times, all of which was blamed on Jess by her mother.

All of this took its toll on Jess who couldn't sleep and spent her time waiting for the next thing to happen with her mother. She gave up childminding as her full attention wasn't on the children in her care and she was ending up in tears whenever someone spoke to her. A worker at the Job Centre advised Jess to make an appointment with her GP who diagnosed her with severe stress. She was offered anti-depressants, which she decided were not for her.

During the Christmas holidays three years ago Jess happened to speak with a member of GRACE who suggested she pop in when GRACE reopened in January. She arrived on a Monday, which was an arts and crafts day, and quickly joined in. This became routine and soon she was volunteering. Organising activities, the research and preparation required, took her mind off her troubles and she really enjoyed it. "I had people to talk to in GRACE" she says, "I didn't have to keep it all in anymore. There were people in GRACE who I really clicked with, they could be me". She had started going to yoga and, after a year with GRACE, her yoga teacher asked if she was interested in a two year teaching course. Jess says "It was going to cost a lot of money and I didn't really see myself as a teacher but I wanted to do the course for myself". It had been many years since Jess had done homework and study was difficult. At the GRACE Digital Café she learned how to type up and save her assessments and how to do research. After a year on the course she was allowed to teach a small class and GRACE arranged for her to teach some of the members. The members also stepped up as a 'pretend' class to help Jess practice and practice the lesson plan before her final exam. "After the exam the two tutors said I was amazing and I passed with flying colours" she says, "GRACE has made me say just go for it, what's the worst that can happen? GRACE has given me so many opportunities and I'm now the most confident I've ever been."

GRACE members were also present at her graduation and Jess now teaches three full size classes, in both Hillhead and Auchinairn. GRACE has also put her through a 'Yoga for Addiction' course and she is looking into a yoga course centered on trauma.

Jess has made friends with people she never thought she would through GRACE, "I'm not as judgemental as I was, I'm more open minded. The core GRACE family values to help others has helped me". Jess also no longer considers herself to be suffering from stress. She is on no medication and hasn't attended her GP for two years. "The feedback I've had from my classes has been amazing" she says, "Sometimes I think are they really talking about me? I can see myself being a part of GRACE for a long time to come".



PROFESSIONAL

GRACE often receives feedback from partners and other professionals. Examples of these are shown below:

Rona Mackay MSP
Strathkelvin and Bearsden



TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I have been working to support G.R.A.C.E. since my election in 2016 and I cannot commend them highly enough. This organisation provides a vital service to residents throughout East Dunbartonshire and have a hugely positive effect on vulnerable people's lives.

It is a peer-led aftercare organisation that supports individuals who have experienced life trauma in a variety of ways and leads them into a brighter future by holistic and caring activities. For the last two years, digital work has proved to be a wonderful avenue to help enhance the skills and confidence of service users. The charity is forging ahead with innovative, ground-breaking work in this area and is achieving fantastic results.

An international delegation-touring unit recently visited their facility and were very impressed at their use of digital connectivity to improve mental health outcomes. Indeed, they are now using GRACE and their use of digital devices as a model of best practice in mental health care in their own countries

I can attest to the fantastic work that they do in my constituency, at every level, and the positive impact they have had on vulnerable people's lives.

They are looking to build on this success by widening their business options for service users, through holistic and technological means, and would appreciate as much financial and general support as possible.

Kind Regards,

MSP for Strathkelvin and Bearsden constituency

Constituency Office, 18A Townhead, Kirkintilloch, G66 1NL
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Stuart McDonald MP

Working for the people of
Cumbernauld, Kilsyth
& Kirkintilloch East

12th April 2019

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am only too happy to take this opportunity to write a letter of recommendation regarding GRACE (Group Recovery Aftercare Enterprise). This is an organisation I have been in regular contact with since very shortly after my election in May 2015. Through that contact I have been impressed with the ideas and principles that underpin the work that GRACE does. Even more so, I have been thoroughly impressed with the practical work that GRACE undertakes to try and build confidence and turn lives around in the communities that I represent and across the East Dunbartonshire Council area. I know it is held in high esteem by those who have benefited from its services, and by the wider community.

As may have been explained to you, GRACE seeks to fill a crucial gap where too often those who had undergone a recovery programme or treatment for a significantly traumatic life event were left without the support required to make the transition back to normal day-to-day life in their community. So instead of a fresh start, too often the end of treatment course or the conclusion of a recovery programme meant a return to the same old routines and problems.

I have visited Grace on a number of occasions to witness various projects such as; IT and sound recording lessons, cooking classes, a sensory garden and arts and crafts workshops. I can see first-hand that it has a hugely influential and positive impact on the lives of those who it supports. Participants regain their confidence from learning new skills and building new friendships which provides them with the opportunity for a fresh start in life free from the traumas that had befallen them before.

GRACE encourages peer support amongst its participants which results in many of those who originally contacted GRACE for support subsequently going on to become trainers or course organisers. Being able to combine what they learn through training with their own first-hand experience of trauma puts these individuals in a fantastic place to help and support others that have followed their

Stuart McDonald
MP for Cumbernauld, Kilsyth & Kirkintilloch East
Reply to: Constituency Office
13 The Wynd, Cumbernauld, G67 2ST
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Tel: 01236 453969



FUTURE PLANS 2019/20

Over the coming year GRACE intends to concentrate on the further development of current and new programmes, improve links with partners, grow membership and volunteer opportunities, expand funding sources and maximizing promotion opportunities for the organisation.

Whilst it is clear there is a desire to move GRACE forward and become a strong partner at local level, there are perceived barriers that can undermine this aspiration. It is therefore essential that internal developments start to happen quickly, always dependent on support from our key stakeholders and partners.

These are some of the actions that will take place in the near future or that are expectable to be deployed as soon as feasible in the current scenario:

- Completion of a series of funding applications to secure Core funding for the next 3 Years.

This project is pivotal to this strategy revision. There is a strong focus on the development of income generation capacity, secure governance procedures that are robust and adequate to the growth aspirations, increase the online presence of the group.

- Outreach

GRACE is celebrating receiving 83k from the National Lottery to support its work with vulnerable adults in Hillhead and Auchinairn and will use the money to run more support activities for local people. The group runs five sessions a week in Hillhead, attended by 50 local adults.

The new funding from The National Lottery Community Fund, which distributes money raised by National Lottery players for good causes and is the largest community funder in the UK, will see the expansion of provision to the community of Auchinairn to four days per week. This means that the number of socially isolated and vulnerable adults able to participate will increase to 80. At the same time, the group will be able to press on with plans to continue the support sessions for the social isolated in the Hillhead area. These will help them to build relationships with others experiencing the same challenges and hopefully enable them to develop their own support network.

Liz McVey, volunteer at GRACE, says: “We are super grateful to the lottery for understanding the need for GRACE in our community, the funding will make such a difference to my life in so many positive ways and will give me so many opportunities but not just me but all the people around me within GRACE and my local area ”

- Need for dedicated resources.

The subject of resource allocation is outside GRACE grasp at the moment. It is essential that discussions start at a local level to clarify on how the future of the sector and most importantly of the support available for the organisations within the Recovery and Aftercare Network will be delivered. Who is and will be responsible for local budgets, and what will be the fit of GRACE in those.

This is vital for GRACE at a moment that the Group is receiving increased referrals and appeals from East Dunbartonshire and beyond. This is a central point and unanimously agreed by the members as key for the success of the Group.



FINANCE



Enter charity name below

Enter SC No below
SC043551

Group Recovery Aftercare Community Enterprise							
Receipts and payments accounts							
For the period from	Period start date			to	Period end date		
	Day	Month	Year		Day	Month	Year
	06	04	2018		05	04	2019

Section A Statement of receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Expendable endowment funds to nearest £	Permanent endowment funds to nearest £	Total funds current period to nearest £	Total funds last period to nearest £
A1 Receipts						
Grant Funding	35,417				35,417	94,297
Donations	9,948				9,948	9,068
Charitable fundraising	7,276				7,276	1,231
Interest	-				0	
Miscellaneous	419				419	
					0	
					0	
					0	
					0	
A1 Sub total	53,060	-	-	-	53,060	104,596
A2 Receipts from asset & investment sales						
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets					0	
Proceeds from sale of investments					0	
A2 Sub total	-	-	-	-	0	-
Total receipts	53,060	-	-	-	53,060	104,596
A3 Payments						
BUILDING RENT	10,153	495			10,648	3,617
INSURANCE	341	-			341	1,742
LEGAL & PROFESSIONAL						
	1,313	900			2,213	4,027
MARKETING	930	-			930	1,818
MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT						
	936	507			1,442	2,202
MISCELLANEOUS	20	-			20	1,902
REFRESHMENTS	1,889	-			1,889	1,188
STATIONERY & OFFICE	269	268			537	211
TELEPHONE, FAX & POSTAGE	505	-			505	650
TRAVEL & SUBSISTANCE						
	848	-			848	1,081
STAFF SESSIONAL	365	20,783			21,148	40,783
STAFF SALARY	23,972	-			23,972	26,342
STAFF TAXES	12,530	-			12,530	7,542
STAFF PENSION	3,352	-			3,352	788
A3 Sub total	57,422	22,953	-	-	80,374	93,893
A4 Payments relating to asset and investment movements						
Purchases of fixed assets					0	
Purchase of investments					0	
A4 Sub total	-	-	-	-	0	-
Total payments	57,422	22,953	-	-	80,374	93,893
Net receipts / (payments)	53,060	-	-	-	53,060	104,596
A5 Transfers to / (from) funds					0	
Surplus / (deficit) for year	(4,362)	(22,953)	-	-	-27,314	10,703

Figure 8: Statement of receipts and payments 2018-2019



Section B Statement of balances

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Expendable endowment funds	Permanent endowment funds	Total current period	Total last period
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash and bank balances at start of year	66,059				66,059	51,205
	Surplus / (deficit) shown on receipts and payments account	(27,314)				(27,314)	14,854
						-	-
						-	-
	Cash and bank balances at end of year	38,745	-	-	-	38,745	66,059
	(Agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))						38,745

Figure 8: Statement of balances 2018-2019

FUNDING SECURED 2019/20

GRACE has secure funding from the following sources for the coming year:

- ADP – £35,000 - Wages
- ADP Non Recurring - £ 12,000 – Digital outreach
- ASDA – Digital equipment
- National Lottery - £42,000 – New Being Well Together Project in both locations

CURRENT AND FUTURE PROGRAMMES

In line with GRACE’s aim to improve the health and wellbeing of members, and the wider community, the Be Healthy on a Budget Course will continue in 2019/20. There is also consideration being given to a proposed community outreach project involving volunteers who qualified from the course, making the use of the skills they learn. If future funding is accessed a once weekly soup kitchen may be possible.

Throughout 2017/18 members have been developing their skills presenting Mental Health Awareness sessions. It is intended that this is developed into a full course with members developing content based on their own personal experience and further research into a range of mental health issues. The development of this course will also encourage those involved to improve skills in communication, presentation and public speaking.

The presentation in its original form was made to and well received by MacKinnon House at Stobhill Hospital, a centre for rehabilitation and the Community Mental Health Team. The presentation will now be developed into a full course designed specifically for GRACE by GRACE members.

The Digital Café will continue until December 2018. GRACE will also develop our Digital Orchestra of Recovery and Aftercare (**DORA**) using tablets in music production.

Another major partnership is the development of Your Own Group Aftercare – **YOGA** for the Mind and Body, a collaboration between GRACE and Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs (SFAAD).



MAXIMISING GRACE'S PROFILE

EPILOGUE

In conclusion, it has been a very exciting and progressive year. GRACE growth continues monthly with more and more individuals who are seeking the support GRACE offers. It is our vision to sustain the progress of our members whilst welcoming new ones.

GRACE supports 40 – 60 members weekly and these years 12 have gained employment.

With having such a year of recognition, it is anticipated that GRACE will continually grow and support more of the most vulnerable in our community. We understand with growth comes a pressure on our aftercare services, having only one employee may stunt our continued development.

We are extremely grateful for the funding support we received this year and recognize that funding is high on our agenda for next year, to sustain and build on what we have achieved.

GRACE needs continuous volunteers, most volunteers started as members, we must continue to progress. The great year has only been possible through the support from the GRACE board, volunteers, and funders and partners. It is expected that this will indeed continue, but we strongly hope it grows in 2017-2018 and beyond.

ROBERT SMITH