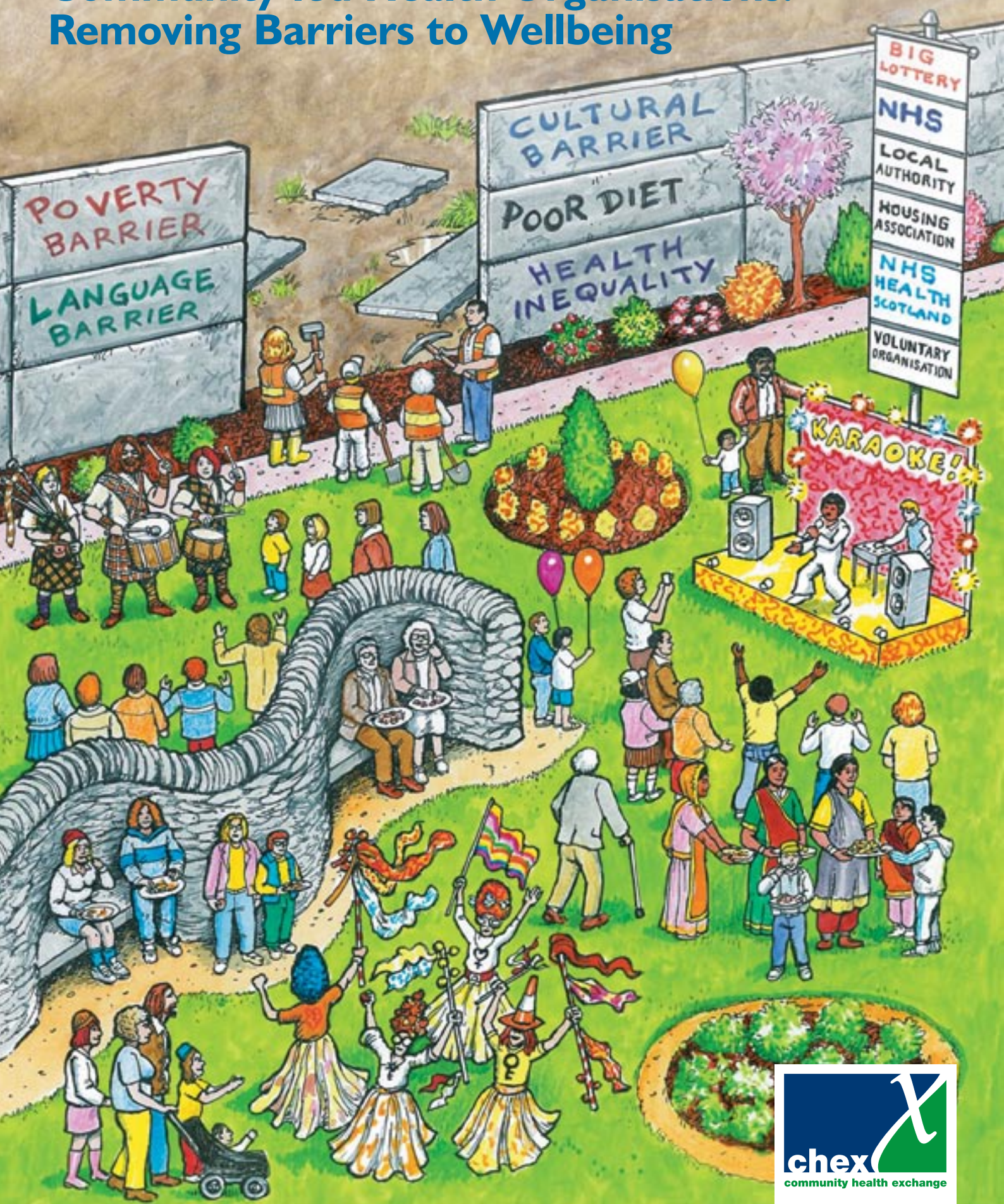
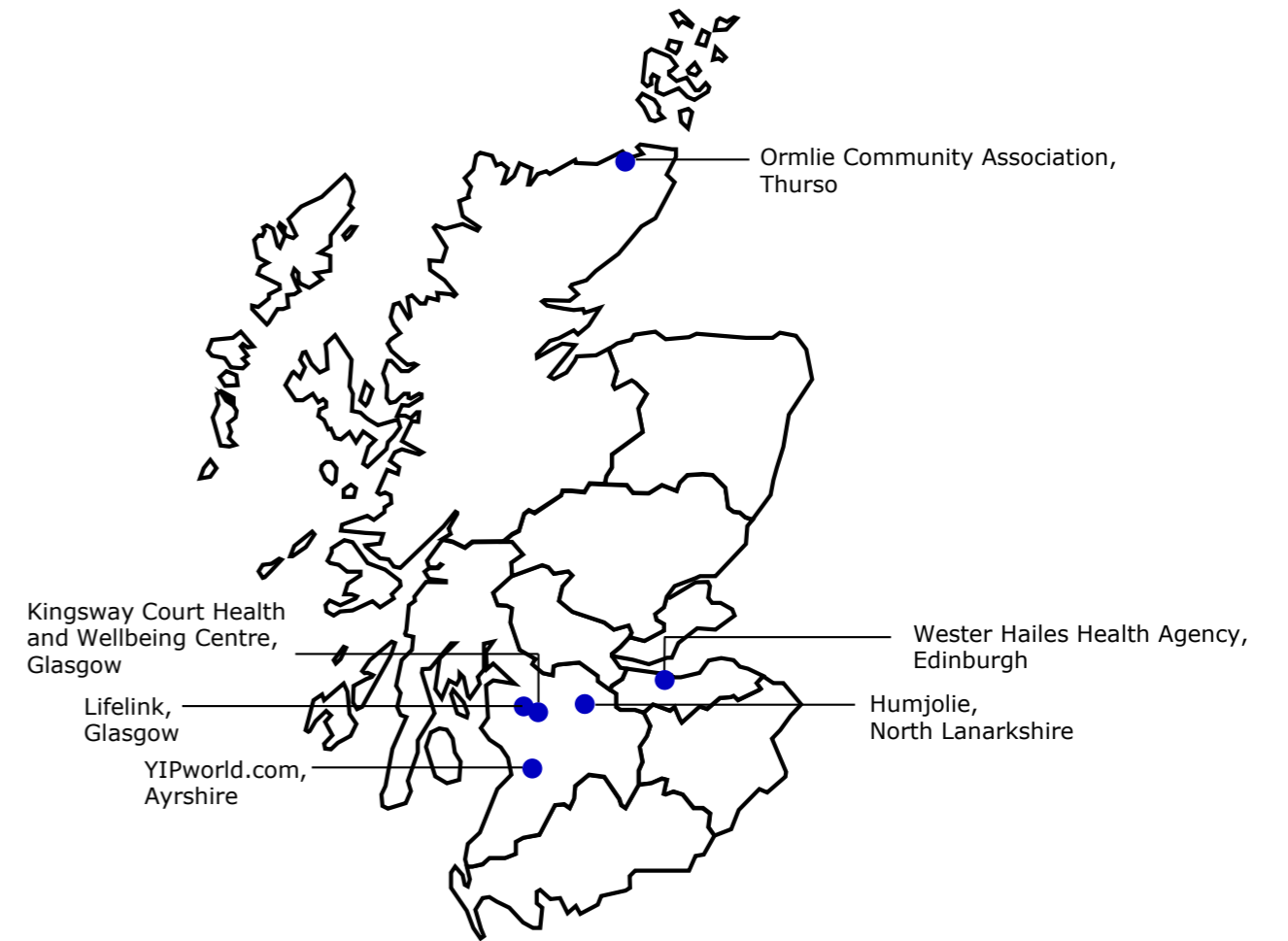


# Breaking Through

Second edition

Community-led Health Organisations:  
Removing Barriers to Wellbeing





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# Introduction

CHEX is delighted to publish Part II of its 'Breaking Through' series of articles. The first series highlighted the work of Healthy Living Centres, the second profiles the activity and impact of other community-led health organisations in Scotland. It also builds on lessons from Healthy Communities: Meeting the Shared Challenge programme disseminated in 2010 which drew on a range of case studies including those from public sector agencies (see [www.scdc.org.uk](http://www.scdc.org.uk)).

CHEX now complements these with illustrations of the work and impact of 6 organisations in the community and voluntary sector. We focus on different themes and highlight the variety of approaches from rural, town and urban communities. These organisations remain at the fore front of working with communities. Despite significant cut-backs in funding, they strive to break down barriers in engaging with people, responding to local needs, reinforcing connectivity within communities and linking their evidence into national and local strategic priorities. All aspects of health are addressed – psychological, physical, emotional, and environmental.

There is no better time than now to gain new insights into working with communities on health issues that they themselves have given energy, commitment, time, expertise and ideas to. Social capital and community resilience are being recognised more by policy-makers e.g. the Chief Medical Officer in his Annual Report 'Time for Change' (2009). Health improvement practitioners are seeking out new models of practice to undertake community-led health approaches to health improvement. These articles aim to reflect impact on health improvement and health inequalities rather than provide an analysis of practice-based models of community-led health work. They are designed to inspire and enthuse, but can also be used to highlight the added value of community-led health approaches and to strengthen the evidence

base of community-led health work. They illustrate diverse approaches and activities for responding to community identified need and differing community characteristics, ensuring the fullest community involvement in all aspects of their work:

**Humjolie** is a Group of South Asian Women in North Lanarkshire. Humjolie is Urdu for 'a long-standing, female friendship beginning in childhood' and reflects the value the women place on support for each other and other women. Their work strives to address the challenges that continue to face South Asian women in Scotland today – including issues relating to language, culture, isolation, access to opportunities and the need to challenge discrimination.

**Kingsway Court Health and Wellbeing Centre** in west Glasgow highlights the interventions generated by working together on issues of importance to a multicultural population experiencing health inequalities. Housing issues, welfare benefit problems, processing applications for asylum, can easily lead to poor mental health and wellbeing. 'Dawn Raids' on asylum seeker families were a feature in the area and a brief case study demonstrates the effectiveness of the community-led response in setting up the Amnesty Group and overcoming a process of social injustice. Their multicultural festival has also built strong social cohesion within the community.

**Lifelink** in Glasgow started life as the Royston Stress Centre in the north of the City. Two decades later and despite huge challenges in securing funding it thrives in a number of areas in the city, providing high quality services in mental health and wellbeing – it's about growing, changing and adapting.

**Ormlie Community Association** in Thurso, Caithness is supporting local people to work towards a healthy community by participating in 'A Planning for Real' process and influencing traffic-calming measures on the estate, new

play areas and upgrading of houses, resulting in the estate being a more desirable place to live.

**Wester Hailes Health Agency** in Edinburgh provides direct insights into working within a community experiencing stark health inequalities – unemployment in Wester Hailes is twice the Edinburgh average. The Agency facilitates the building of 'social capital' through supporting local people to make connections with other people and organisations. Together, a wide range of initiatives have been developed such as their community garden harnessing the energy and skills of local people to engender positive change in their community.

**Yipworld.com** in East Ayrshire is a vital resource for local young people. Working with young people in many different ways from building skills and confidence to helping a return to the classroom or accessing training and college. Key to Yipworld.com is the philosophy of youth empowerment, not viewed in any tick-box fashion, but genuinely carried out through a value base which supports young people to direct the organisation through their membership of the Board of Governance.

## Acknowledgement

We very much thank:  
James Henderson, Community Researcher, who wrote the articles  
Community-led health organisations that contributed their experience, expertise, time and some of the photographs  
Alan Thomson, photographer  
David Alexander, who produced the cover illustrations  
Ecru Design who undertook the graphic design

## About CHEX

CHEX provides a resource to community-led approaches to health improvement and challenges health inequalities. Initiated in November 1999, we are part of the Scottish Community Development Centre (based in Glasgow) and primarily funded by NHS Health Scotland. We operate at a strategic and operational level. Strategically, we promote the benefits of community-led health in national policies and working groups and operationally we provide training and networking opportunities to share good practice. While our focus remains supporting community-led organisations, we now also offer training and support in delivering community-led approaches to their partner agencies in NHS and local authorities. For further information on our range of services visit [www.chex.org.uk](http://www.chex.org.uk).

## Humjolie...

# South Asian Women Leading The Way



**In Urdu, Humjolie literally means ‘a long-standing, female friendship beginning in childhood’. It’s the name chosen by a group of South Asian women in Lanarkshire to emphasise the value they place on support from other women, as they work together to tackle the many health-related challenges and inequalities that blight the lives of Asian women in their area. The group has taken this community-led approach to health in partnership with NHS Lanarkshire, and has now grown to approximately 25 regular participants, with still more joining activities specific to their needs. As they’ve grown in confidence, so has the complexity of the projects they’ve organised for South Asian women as well as people from the wider community.**

### Getting Organised

Humjolie doesn’t as yet have a base of its own, a huge frustration, so they use a members’ home for meetings of their committee, Azra Karim, Chair; Sadia Ahmed, Vice-Chair; Shamim Rashid, Treasurer; and Anila Ansari, who as a Community Health Educator with NHS Lanarkshire supports their work, and also takes the role of Secretary.

They talk through a very imaginative ‘portfolio’ of community-led health improvement activities undertaken in the last three years. As their story unfolds, the scale of difficulties and challenges faced by many South Asian women in Scotland today is revealed ... language, culture, isolation, access to opportunities and services, discrimination ... all impacting on their health and wellbeing. This is the key to understanding why Humjolie has formed and why its members are so determined that it should make a fundamental difference to the lives of South Asian women in Lanarkshire.

### Finding our Voice

#### Azra Karim

*Chair of Humjolie*

I was three when I first came to Scotland so I’m ‘born and bred’ here. I saw my mother having to go through a huge cultural shift. She was very strong, but she had problems with the language. When I was eight years old, I would take her to the doctors and would say what she was feeling. One time she was pregnant and needed to see a lady doctor. I told this to the male doctor but he didn’t understand - she was used to a very different culture.

She stayed the only South Asian woman in the area for some years, then others started coming and their situation was almost always the same, problems with language and culture. I’m an ‘auntie’, Shamim our Treasurer, she’s an ‘auntie’ too, and Anila, our Secretary, well she’s almost one. We wanted to set up something for ourselves and have formed Humjolie. We’re now getting a voice, so we can empower other ‘aunties’ too.

We’re working to keep the group together and helping the women who come to our events to get answers to their health questions and see the friendly face of the NHS. We’ve plans for a drop-in, a place of our own. It’s our dream and it will take a lot of money, so we’re having to be realistic for now – but this is our dream.

We’re not just interested in the Asian community. I’d like my neighbours to be involved and for different ethnic groups to build understanding of each others’ cultures.

Humjolie have worked closely with the Bellshill and District Community Forum and built up a strong relationship, but its taken patience. Lack of knowledge of South Asian culture, including which foods can and can’t be eaten by Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims, is widespread. Mainstream Scottish culture – even within the NHS, where for instance the need for halal food for Muslims may still be missed – has not been learning fast; it has taken persistence and courage from the group to overcome such barriers.

Their ‘CV’ of activities is impressive and extensive: healthy-eating, exercise/yoga, walking, awareness raising

of cancer screening, a tour of Scottish Parliament, using computers, International Women’s Day, fashion shows, radio programmes on health, and the promoting of volunteering. Together, they are generating a very different sense of what health and wellbeing can and should mean for South Asian women in Lanarkshire.

### Riding the Airwaves

One of the first big projects they worked on, with funding from Awards for All, was a Basic Broadcast Media skills course in which eight women learnt about radio scripting, sound editing and recording. With these skills, they then worked with Awaz

FM, the Glasgow community radio station – see [www.awazfm.co.uk](http://www.awazfm.co.uk) – to generate a series of 12 health improvement programmes. Using a phone-in format they tackled a range of health issues including breast and cervical cancer screening, bowel cancer screening, mental health and post-natal depression.

Shamim, who undertook the training, gained confidence in using computers and learnt about a range of health issues including those relating to heart disease and diabetes, relevant to her own family. Azra became involved in the radio programme on post-natal depression. She’d run a health clinic in Motherwell

when younger and worked with women in Pakistan, and so knew this to be a hidden issue for South Asians. Two Humjolie members now volunteer at Awaz FM and the group has won an Award from the North Lanarkshire Community Learning and Development Partnership in 2009 for their work.



### Urdu, English and Punjabi Too

Azra has recently developed, organised and run a healthy-eating course Khaana Khazana at Kirkshaws Neighbourhood Centre specifically for South Asian women – in Urdu, English and Punjabi too – This was funded by NHS Lanarkshire Healthy Living Initiative fund. Key aims were to increase knowledge and confidence of buying and using vegetables that are easily available in Scotland and raise awareness of the links between diet and coronary heart disease and diabetes, which are particularly high in the South Asian community.

Running the class specifically for South Asian women alone has helped to build participants' confidence in learning in the community: it would be, for instance, difficult for a Muslim woman to attend a mainstream cooking class because of the extensive use of non-halal foods and a related sense of not 'fitting-in' and feeling isolated. The women were able to try out culturally 'unusual' foods such as broccoli, smoked fish and cabbage; to socialise together; and experience the Community Centre and see what else it offers.

The Centre's manager saw the impact of the course on participants and is seeking ways of resourcing a similar course in the future, using

the same recipes, so that it can be offered to all centre users. Azra is delighted: "I want all local people, single mums, girls who've never touched a pan in their life, and so on, to learn from this."

### Our Common Humanity

The group is very concerned at the 'Post 9/11' experiences of Muslims in Scotland and the UK. Their own experience tells them that discrimination through race and religion has grown, and that there is increased racial tensions and less trust between ethnic groups in Scotland. They feel that, as a consequence, the mental health and wellbeing of the Muslim community is suffering.

Five or six years ago a new, purpose-built Mosque and Islamic Centre opened at Bellshill. Many women were encouraged to attend groups at the Mosque and their numbers dwindled for activities at community venues. Humjolie is working to make sure that Muslim women feel confident to join in with both the wider community and the Mosque, and to build bridges through multi-cultural and inter-faith events; as Azra explains "to show deep down inside that we're all the same."

### At the Inter-faith Party

At the end of 2009 and beginning of 2010, the dates for the Muslim festival of Eid, the Hindu festival of Dwali and Christmas fell in close proximity, giving Humjolie the idea for one of their most successful events yet. There were speakers from each Faith, and 120 women and children took part and enjoyed an eclectic range of pop, bhangra and bollywood music. Such has been the response that Humjolie now plan to run the event again in early December with the support of Motherwell Community Forum, Bellshill & District Community Forum, NHS Lanarkshire, the Terence Higgins Trust and the Princess Royal Trust Lanarkshire Carers Centre.

### One Gender, Many Cultures

Humjolie organised a fashion show, with the backing of the Scottish Community Foundation, NHS Lanarkshire and North Lanarkshire Community Forums, bringing together women from different ethnic groups in Lanarkshire – South Asian, white Scottish and British, Chinese and East Asian, and Congolese.



The event was a stunning success with over 30 women from across different ethnic communities modelling, and almost 200 women attending: they raised £1200 for Maggie's Cancer Centre at the Wishaw General Hospital in Lanarkshire.

Humjolie has taken the opportunity to develop this link further with the Cancer Centre through a members' visit to build their understanding of existing cancer services. The Centre is keen to make links with minority ethnic communities and a Humjolie member now volunteers there, providing an opportunity for the Centre to learn more about providing culturally-sensitive services.

Members of Humjolie recently took part in a Health Issues in the Community (HIIC) training: a course promoted by the Community Health Exchange (CHEX) and NHS Health Scotland, which provides insight into community-led health. Sadia has children and so limited time for other activities, but was keen to get involved in Humjolie's work. She undertook the HIIC training and learned new ways of thinking about health, in particular about the rights of service users and the impact of health inequalities on different

communities of people. She felt encouraged to think more about how Humjolie could further promote health and social wellbeing across the South Asian community.

Through the course, the group decided to focus on mental health and look for opportunities to use their knowledge. During the Mental Health Arts and Film Festival in Lanarkshire in October 2010, they've worked to promote good mental health and wellbeing within the South Asian community: as with many communities, discussion of

'mental health' has been taboo for some, who've learned to associate it with fear and stigma rather than understanding that we all have mental health and that good mental health is a tool for improving our wellbeing. The group also identified clear gaps in service provision; for instance, lack of bi-lingual counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) for South Asians in Lanarkshire and further afield, which would allow them to improve their mental health without resorting to medication.

They produced a drama Lamha-e-Fikria to raise awareness of mental health issues, and of issues for carers too, within the South Asian community, the wider community and service providers. They have successfully used this drama, with support from the Carers' Centre at the Princess Royal Trust Lanarkshire, and now have

invitations to perform again from other carers' groups.

They also organised a four session course run by Naveeda Iqbal, an Urdu-speaking, Muslim woman counsellor and psycho-therapist from Glasgow. The course, called Sukoon (Urdu for tranquility), is designed to get women talking about good mental health, and to

tackle the stigma associated with the word 'mental'. 19 women have taken the course, and were startled to see how their perceptions changed over the four weeks. Their feedback also indicated how valuable a bi-lingual approach (Urdu and English) to the course was in deepening their understanding of mental health issues.



## Humjolie, a Fantastic Resource for All

### Christine Reid

*Health Improvement Senior with NHS Lanarkshire*

Our health improvement work within NHS Lanarkshire focuses on prevention, education and community development (otherwise known as community-led health).

Humjolie grew out of our Community Health Educators Project that was looking at the poor uptake rates of breast and cervical screening by black and ethnic minority women. These services and their literature were simply not culturally appropriate for many South Asian women, so we decided we needed to employ a specifically Urdu and Punjabi-speaking South Asian woman if we were to make progress – we've been very fortunate to recruit Anila.

Getting women together to talk about screening was the starting point, and then other issues came up naturally through their conversations: family problems, loneliness, isolation, immigration issues, and domestic abuse. That's how the idea for Humjolie grew: a support group for South Asian women where they could speak their first language(s) and build trust. The members have grown in confidence and now taken on challenging projects: a fashion show, radio programmes and an inter-faith celebration, to breakdown barriers and get rid of myths – they feel empowered.

Its also been a fantastic opportunity for NHS Lanarkshire in so many ways, and we're very lucky: Maggie's Centre now has its first South Asian volunteer; when NHS Lanarkshire needs a sounding board on culturally appropriate information and services, we can consult on materials with Humjolie – such as our DVD on breast and cervical cancer screening; Humjolie can provide volunteers and support discussions in Urdu; and they've helped with stories for our 'Hallo-style' magazine that promotes health improvement for women. Humjolie are getting known!

Our work is just beginning in making all our services accessible in terms of culture, religion and language for both Asian women and men. Humjolie is now a very effective group, providing invaluable support to South Asian women and their families across the whole of Lanarkshire. Anila's role in supporting the group has been crucial and so we'll be fighting for the funding to keep her in post.

## A Place to Grow

It's been a very busy three years, but the group continues to generate and act on new ideas. One potential area of development is the health of South Asian men, who need bi-lingual services and information too; for instance, through raising awareness of prostate cancer and mental health. Although this is new territory for them, sharing learning is at the heart of community-led health, and they can see that it would have benefits for both men and women: "It would be good to show the men that they can organise themselves as well ..."

The group has gained strong insight into a range of health-related issues for South Asian women, including: those arriving from the Sub-continent who face isolation within a new culture and language; women struggling with abusive situations at home; and immigration issues affecting whole families. It has created a network in which women can discuss such crises, and Anila has a key role here in linking people with the organisations that can help, such as health services, solicitors, refugee services and supports.

Finally, the group still has a dream of their 'own place': a Centre where South Asian women can feel confident and safe in meeting, talking and gaining skills ... becoming empowered. The more they've learned, the more they have recognised the need for such a Centre. Three years on, and given the financial environment, it remains a major challenge to find the funding for a building. However, they've done the groundwork, proven the need, and demonstrated that they can deliver. Building on their many successes, the women of Humjolie now have the confidence and motivation to turn their dream into reality.

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# Kingsway Court Health and Wellbeing Centre

## Working With Diversity

**Kingsway Court Health and Wellbeing Centre is a community-led health initiative serving Kingsway Court, a complex of six high-rise blocks and 684 households in Scotstoun, near the River Clyde in Glasgow. Its services are now many and varied, and over the last decade it has grown its own inspiring multi-cultural vision for a healthy community.**

“There’s a lot of poverty and deprivation within the flats”, explains Charlotte Boyce, Chairperson of Kingsway Court Health and Wellbeing Centre. “The Centre is a hub for health and cultural activities. It makes people more aware, and takes them out of their environment and makes them feel good.”

She sees the Centre, based in the ground floor of one tower, as providing services for the whole community: residents who’ve lived there for most of the last five decades – it was built in 1964 – and others who’ve moved there more recently, including a significant number of people who are asylum seekers and refugees.

Charlotte takes a deep breathe, then talks through the extensive activities the Centre now provides ...

- a youth programme
- an international festival – the Kingslink Carnival
- a lunch club and drop-in for older people
- English as a second language classes
- football teams
- hill-walking group
- stress management – through Lifelink (see page 17)
- smoking cessation
- men’s and women’s groups
- mothers’ and toddlers’ group
- information, advice and support service
- arts and crafts
- film-making – the Kingsway Eye
- internet access
- volunteer development
- credit union – with Glasgow West CU



### Staying Healthy

#### Ina Smith

I’ve lived in Kingsway for 48 years and seen big changes. I’ve been coming to the Centre ten years now. When I retired, it took me a while to join, but then I’ve never looked back. I do the dishes at the lunch club and set the tables; it’s a team effort. We love coming to the Centre. We have a jumble sale to raise money, people come to tell us about health and pensions, and we’ve done Tai Chi.

The community health profile for the Yoker and Scotstoun area<sup>1</sup> as a whole shows the high level of health inequalities the local community faces:

- average life expectancy for men in the area of 69.8 years, four years below the Scottish average of 73.9.
- average life expectancy for women in the area of 76.4 years, almost three years below the average of 79.1.
- alcohol related-deaths approaching two and half times the average.
- drug-related deaths are almost three times the average.
- the percentage of people who are ‘income deprived’ is almost 80%.

Given the extent of this challenge, the Centre has developed extensive links with other local organisations and services in order to open-up a full range of options and opportunities for residents.

Important to the Centre’s development has been the arrival in Glasgow of a diverse population of refugees and asylum seekers. The Centre has responded to this change by successfully bringing together people from all ethnicities on its Board of Directors and into its programme of activities; very much in line with its vision of “... a Proud, Capable and Confident multi-cultural community.”

### A Mosaic of Interactions

#### Frank McMaster

*Dumbarton Road Corridor Environment Trust*

Tonight we’re doing a door-to-door collection for composting and recycling at Kingsway Court. We can promote the Centre’s events as we go round, and they, our recycling scheme - there’s a huge cross-over.

Take Meet the Neighbours: it’s a community engagement day the Centre runs. We put up our marquees and run the bike workshop; we have generators powered by bikes that young people can use to provide music; and we’ve a mountain bike adventure trail. We all muck in and have a good day.

We run the Glasgow Greenies project for children (8-12), raising awareness of the environment each summer. Half the kids are from Kingsway Court, and we use the Centre as a base, going out to do activities: rock climbing, exploring the shore by canoe, and the Glasgow Show. There’s a rich mix of ethnic groups in the area which makes working here very interesting, and the Centre is a tremendous example of integration.



## An Answered Prayer

**Safia:** I've lived here for seven years. I was an asylum seeker and someone told me there was a Centre that can help people, so from the first day I got involved. They helped me with claiming money, shopping for halal food and with housing problems: any problems, I'd come here to see Jassim (staff member).

The people here helped us a lot when there were 'Dawn Raids'. The immigration police would come in vans, and the people stood up for us and stopped it. My son, he was two years old and I used to bring him to the Centre, after prayers, at 5am ... my prayers were answered, of course. They've stopped the Raids here now.

I've also been involved in the running of a women's group here for six years, making jewellery and I cook Asian food for them. We've had carnivals and I cook Pakistani rice for them. It's a big festival for everyone; Pakistanis, Sri Lankans, Chinese, Russians and Scottish. My boys used to go canoeing, biking, and hiking ... so many activities during the holidays.

Now, we've got 'status' – indefinite leave to remain. I'm staying in Glasgow. I love the weather, the people and I've so many friends. I'm still helping some Pakistani people, filling in forms, helping them get indefinite leave ... it feels good to help.

## Good Cause For Hope

**Juman:** I came here in 2007. The Glasgow Asylum Seekers Support Project told me there was someone speaking Arabic who was very good. Jassim is very familiar with the asylum process and problems with the Home Office.

We've been on the trips the Centre arranges – to Stirling Castle, Ayr Beach and St. Andrews – with people from all different countries: Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and Scotland. Some are asylum seekers who have then got indefinite leave after struggling for years, so I'm hopeful when I hear their stories.

**Agnes:** As an asylum seeker, if I need support on my case then I come in and see Jassim. It's very, very important. I also use the community computer for emails, internet and research – it's an important resource.

I'm a member of Kingsway Eye: they teach anybody who's interested in film-making. It's been a stepping stone for me, and they've linked me up with Diversity Films. At the moment, I've an idea that has been short-listed.

It would be great to have a crèche. Sometimes you need to go somewhere without the kids – it would be marvellous, but I don't know?



## Through Thick and Thin

There is real concern within the Centre that Jassim Johe's post as Asylum Seeker/Refugee Development and Support Worker is at risk. Over the last seven years, he's built up the role, and his reputation now means he gets calls from across Glasgow and further afield – Dundee, Inverness, even the USA. Given the seriousness of the issues, they don't turn people away.

He has supported many, many people through immigration-related crises: supporting them in their application for asylum, with benefit problems, and with health and housing issues. The impact of such pressures on their mental health is very severe ... and the difference that support makes over time, phenomenal.

Jassim's development role also shines through, whether supporting a youth project or organising the food village at the Carnival: "It's not easy with 36 people in one kitchen, with different languages and attitudes."

## The Dawn Raids

Community-led health has been described as the community "leading, identifying and prioritising" the services it needs; often complementing existing NHS services, often creating new initiatives, and sometimes challenging the status quo.

Jean Donnachie and Noreen Real are both on the Centre's Board and live in the flats. Jean has been involved with the Centre from the start; Noreen most definitely is now. Both became very concerned about the treatment of asylum seekers living in the Court when a man jumped off a balcony. They learnt about 'the Dawn Raids': the arrival of the immigration police, often at 5.30am in the morning, to take people off for questioning. They were shocked to find that officers were arriving in full 'battle gear', breaking down doors, putting young people in handcuffs ... and they didn't want that happening in their community.

"Tackling the Dawn Raids was a big, big step. We set up the Kingsway Amnesty Group, got permission to use the Centre and got up at 5am every morning; as did my son, the Centre's Caretaker Eddie, who opened up." explains Jean.

Noreen continues: "Every asylum seeker who came to the Amnesty Group could leave their name and phone number. We'd ring them if the Home Office van arrived and they'd come down the backstairs and join the Group, where they'd be safe."



There was concern about the Centre being involved. Martin Coyle, the Centre Coordinator, recalls a call from a housing manager saying that they were not sure the Centre should be used in this way. He pointed out that "we didn't initiate the campaign and weren't politically involved, but were fulfilling a need and supporting community capacity-building."

This work went on for a year and a half, a huge commitment. Yet they'd seen the difference new families from other countries were making to the area. Within a year of people starting to arrive, a whole different atmosphere was being generated – a new sense of community and the Centre was thriving. For Jean and Noreen, this was not then a political act but a humanitarian one. They just didn't want their neighbours and friends, and their families, being treated like criminals, and they learned to use their voices to say this. A meeting with Alex Salmond followed, and a sense that they were "making ripples". Eventually the Raids stopped and people began to get indefinite leave to remain.



## Getting From Here to There

“I remember coming up here when I was 16 or 17: Kingsway Court in the seventies was a ‘des res’. It was a reasonably affluent area and had no need of community development”, reflects Martin Coyle. However, he then paints a dramatic and painful picture of change during the 80s when Government policies hit hard, and social and economic policy devastated the area. Within the space of a few years the community had become part of the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland.

He sees the Centre as a response by local people – the then Kingsway Tenants Association worked to establish it – and by the state to this ongoing crisis. The challenge is to sustain it. With the threat of redundancies hanging over them, and the short-termism of much of the work they are funded to do by the Community Planning Partnership, this is no easy matter.

As part of the Scottish Government’s nationwide initiative Meeting the Shared Challenge to support the public sector and community health initiatives in understanding each other – coordinated by the Scottish Community Development Centre and the Community Health Exchange (CHEX) – Martin has met with the Head of Planning and Health Improvement at West Glasgow Community Health and Social Care Partnership; each gaining insight into the dilemmas the other faces.

He’s also working on the new Business Plan which will be outcome-focused, build in evaluation and monitoring, and focus on a central theme of developing ‘social capital’ – “the resources people develop and draw on to increase their confidence and self-esteem, their sense of connectedness, belonging, and ability to bring about change in their lives and communities”.<sup>2</sup> Many developments are being planned including work on men’s health, crèche provision and volunteer support.

Chair Charlotte Boyce and Martin joined the CHEX study tour to Northern Ireland

to find out more about the development of community-led health there, and both were impressed by the freshness, energy and commitment they discovered. They also saw how committed funding through the Peace Fund had helped, and Martin is angry and frustrated that funding remains so elusive for the crucial work of tackling health inequalities here. He maintains that the state has a duty to people in this community to develop and sustain policies that support their wellbeing, yet questions if this will be forthcoming: “The banks went belly-up and without delay billions were made available to bale them out, but there’s no money for poverty.”

The work of the Centre, its staff, volunteers and Board members, and its partners across the area is fundamental to the viability of Kingsway Court as a healthy community. While city partnership agencies continue to re-organise and re-structure, Kingway’s capacity to manage change gives great cause for optimism for a healthy, diverse future.

1. See the West Glasgow Community Health Profile via [http://www.scotpho.org.uk/home/Comparativehealth/Profiles/chp\\_profiles.asp](http://www.scotpho.org.uk/home/Comparativehealth/Profiles/chp_profiles.asp)
2. From the Kingsway Court Health and Wellbeing Centre Business Plan

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## Lifelink

### From Small Acorns...

**In the early nineties, a small band of people local to the Royston area of North Glasgow were concerned about the use of tranquilisers and anti-depressants as a response to the high stress of living in a very deprived area. They wanted to find better ways to support people struggling with poor mental health and so, with Urban Aid funding, Royston Stress Centre was born. Almost two decades later, and now as Lifelink, it’s a complex community health organisation providing high-quality services to many people across Glasgow.**



### Getting Started ... a Community-led Health Approach

#### Isobel Mckinlay

*until recently Lifelink’s long-time Chairperson*

From the tranquiliser support group, we set up the Stress Centre and this has led on to other things. I was one of the group and the doctors, psychiatrists and pills weren’t really helping me. I wasn’t really community-minded, it was more for me.

Alternative therapies, I knew a wee bit and that they didn’t involve pills. We visited Polmont in Edinburgh and a stress centre in Easterhouse to see what we could offer. We wanted it to be professional, we’ve always done it very professionally, and started with a couple of therapists.

It worked more through word of mouth and we were in touch with health services, social work and doctor’s surgeries. Our purpose was not to say “if you are having problems with stress, a therapist can take away your horrible life”. No, it was about strategies to ease your burdens.

18 years on, I’m amazed at how it is now. We were asked to set up the Possil Stress Centre. We’ve got Lifelink Youth. We deliver services in Govan, Pollok, East Glasgow and the Dumbarton Road Corridor area. People get in touch to say can you do this? Can you do that?

We’ve had to continually fight for funding and we’ve always had targets to meet and evaluations to justify ourselves. At one time, we were in danger of being closed down: we got support from local people and the MP, and we wrote letters galore and got support from doctors. In a way, it was that support that swung it, but it was a nerve-wracking time.

How I would describe it is as ‘for the people’. It’s made a difference to a lot of people’s lives and it’s made a lot of difference to me.

## Steady as You Grow

The organisation has grown steadily and impressively. It has faced ongoing challenges, yet sustained its strong, underlying commitment to ensuring that people get the services they need. In 1997, Royston Stress Centre was asked by the Health Board to start the Possil Stress Centre; the latter becoming independent in 2001 and evolving into Maryhill and Possil Stress Centre, then merging back with Royston in April 2009. A Youth Stress Centre was started in 2000, following an approach by the Glasgow Education Business Partnership who wanted to provide support for young people coping with stress and low self confidence – these were barriers to them achieving in terms of education and employment. The knowledge and expertise developed by the organisation was now well-recognised and they began to expand, developing new services in 2004 and 2005 in North and South Lanarkshire, south-west Glasgow, the Dumbarton Road Corridor area and at Barlinnie Prison. The financial environment over the last three years has been tough but the organisation is undaunted and continues to adapt, completing a merger, a restructuring and a rebranding under the Lifelink banner.

## Staying Rooted

The actions of the tranquiliser support group to establish the Stress Centre are clearly from the community-led health tradition and, although the organisation has expanded considerably since, it continues to work closely with the communities (of place) it serves and, likewise the community (of interest/identity) of people with experience of mental distress. 90% of its Board members use or have used its services and so keep the organisation focused on the concerns of people struggling with stress and mild-to-moderate mental health problems.

There is also a strong emphasis on engaging people in volunteering and on the benefits and purpose that this brings to them and the wider community. The organisation also sees as essential the involvement of service-users in evaluation of its services and has developed a Peer Research Team of young people who

undertake surveys and focus groups to inform future developments. Lesley Benzie, Chief Executive, reflects: “we still seek and value strong service-user and community input.”

Lifelink’s experience of participatory approaches has been valuable within the nationwide Meeting the Shared Challenge programme to promote community-led health – facilitated by the Scottish Community Development Centre and the Community Health Exchange (CHEX). Lesley and a service-user ran participatory exercises at a workshop to support statutory sector staff in understanding the effectiveness and benefits of community-led health and of working with community-led health initiatives.

## The Health Inequalities Gap

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

### World Health Organisation<sup>1</sup>

Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health. To reach a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, an individual or group must be able to identify and to realize aspirations, to satisfy needs, and to change or cope with the environment.

### World Health Organisation<sup>2</sup>

Crucial to the initial work by the tranquiliser support group in the early 1990s was the recognition that high levels of stress and distress in the area were related to socio-economic factors, leading to the desperate prescribing of tablets by GPs. The Stress Centre explored the use of counselling, massage therapies and group activities as healthier, more effective approaches to demonstrate their value in supporting people in coping and in strengthening their communities. Lifelink provides its services (free-of-charge) to people in some of the most deprived communities in the City and Scotland – Greater Pollok, Craigton, Govan, the Dumbarton Road Corridor, Maryhill, Kelvin and Canal, Springburn and North East Glasgow.

## Health Inequalities the Realities<sup>3</sup>

In Springburn, north Glasgow, in comparison to the Scottish average:

- life expectancy for men is 66.7 years, 7 years below average (73.9)
- life expectancy for women is 75.4 years, 4 years below average (79.3)
- smoking is 57% above average
- drug-related deaths, 3.5 times above average
- the suicide rate is 43% above average
- the numbers of people who are ‘income deprived’ and ‘employment deprived’ (of working age), approx. twice the average.

In Govan, south-west Glasgow, in comparison to the Scottish average:

- life expectancy for men is 67 years, almost 7 years below average
- life expectancy for women is 75.4 years, almost 4 years below average
- alcohol and drug-related deaths, 2.5 times the average
- the suicide rate, 35% above average
- prescriptions for anxiety and depression, 46% above average
- long-term ‘limiting illness’, 56% above average.

## All Round Health

To support people, both adults and younger people, in making changes in their lives, the organisation takes a holistic and client-centred approach, working directly with them to develop their emotional resilience and well-being. At Lifelink’s adult services, people start with one or more individual sessions and can then progress through different programmes, as appropriate – the Single Session Therapy/Work model. The programmes include:

- stress relief and management.
- counselling and alternative therapies such as massage and acupuncture.
- personal development: group work/training that includes stress and emotional management, building better relationships, and the Your Life Your Choices programmes.
- crisis intervention and suicide prevention.

Lifelink’s work with younger people likewise supports them to build emotional resilience and self-confidence, and to cope with crises. Services include counselling and groupwork through schools and care/addiction programmes, as well as the provision of emotional literacy training for staff and parenting support for families.



## I Wish These Groups Existed When I Was at School

### David Harkins

volunteer with Lifelink's youth service

I've had a serious back injury and was severely depressed but didn't realise it. My sister suggested trying Lifelink. Later I was invited to join the Board, which I did for a year and a half, and I began volunteering work with young people.

I'm a co-facilitator going into schools and building self-esteem and confidence through games, exercises and relaxation. I absolutely love it. We'll work with a group of eight to twelve, no bigger. There's normally a facilitator and myself and we'll do about fifty minutes: confidence games, some relaxation, and a question and answer session – once a week for ten sessions.

Some of the young people are referred by guidance or pastoral care workers; perhaps they are not mixing well or are affected by difficulties at home. We are working in deprived areas, and parents might not be working or have an issue with drink.

I write a lot of poetry, so I get them to create poems. Normally I'll do this when working on the 'group agreement' that will include respect and being heard. I'll make a poem using key words and get them to read it out. They think it's brilliant, and the following week they come in with their own.

At the last session, they are presented with a certificate and can say how they've benefited. It's amazing how their confidence grows: a lot are very quiet to begin with, then they can't say enough. I wish these groups had existed when I was at school.



### Linked to Lifelink

Lifelink has intentionally worked to build strong links with other services that can then provide a range of supports to its service-users; for example, with services working on debt, relationship breakdown, crisis intervention and addiction. It also provides a wide range of training programmes across the City on improving mental health and emotional resilience, and working with crisis and self-harm. It has also helped to develop a collaborative-style of working with both statutory and other third sector services in north Glasgow, as part of the Primary Mental Health Partnership.

## Collaborative Working

“the most positive experience I've had”

### Jane Thomson

Springpark Community Mental Health Team, North Glasgow.

I don't know of anyone else working in this way, and that's after 20-25 years in mental health. From 2005, we've worked more closely with non-statutory organisations; in particular we've developed the Review, Consult and Allocate (RCA) process.

The RCA is simply about the partners – secondary care, primary care, Lifelink and Carr-Gomm Scotland (a community care service) – bringing together (anonymised) cases for discussion. What's different is that it's collaborative working. We work on an equal footing and each view is heard, statutory and non-statutory. You have to put the time in to find the best placed organisation to help a person at any one time.

Initially I wasn't convinced: it took a lot of effort but would it make a difference? But it's worked and we're still meeting every two weeks several years later. Improving communication breaks down the barriers, helping us realise that we're all working with people facing many difficulties.

We're not only a medical service: we're broad and include nurses, occupational therapists, social work, psychologists, and Lifelink can see this now. We're also referring a huge number of people to them. They must be very, very busy, and that's because they are effective.

This comes from the people I've worked with too: I've not had any negative comments about Lifelink and that's unusual. This is the most positive experience I've had working with another organisation.

## Growing, Changing, Adapting

The last three years have seen considerable change. As a result of reduced funding, Royston and Maryhill & Possil Stress Centres were encouraged to consider a merger and, once agreed, this process was facilitated by Glasgow CVS's Healthy Organisations programme. A merger action group involving board members from both organisations was formed. Full staff consultation was undertaken and seen as crucial to the future development of the organisation. It took over a year's work to complete and, following the formal merger, there has been further development work with the staff team, reviewing their roles and implementing a new streamlined administrative and management structure.

During this period, the organisation has coped with considerable cuts in funding: in 2008/9, a 20% cut; and in 2010/11, a further 7% cut from both the Community Planning Partnership and the Community Health and Care Partnership. Inevitably there were reduced hours for some staff, including those in frontline services, and voluntary redundancies. None-the-less, against this challenging background, the newly-merged organisation has been able to implement a new client management system and complete its rebranding as Lifelink.

It's been fast and furious, as Lesley Benzie reflects: “At times its been really stressful, and for different people at different times. We've

worked through individual consultations with staff and Board members to involve all.”

Another crucial aspect in this journey of change in recent years has been the organisation’s adoption of a social enterprise approach, in line with the changing emphasis in Scottish Government policy. Lifelink has been building relationships with a range of strategic partners and funders – the Community Health and Care Partnership and Community Planning Partnership, and others – and is now well-placed to contribute to cross-cutting strategies such as regeneration, employability, health improvement and tackling health inequalities.

For instance, Lifelink’s work within the NHS’s Choose Life Strategy Group, has led on to a partnership with North and East Glasgow Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP) on a programme of suicide preven-

tion, which will be externally evaluated and this learning will then be shared across Scotland. Lesley sees such a strategic approach as vital: “We wouldn’t have survived as one small community project working in isolation. We’ve developed our holistic, social and client-centred model and used it to work in partnership with statutory services. It’s taken a long-time to become part of the framework for health, but certainly in the north, we’re influencing policy-makers and funders.”

Through such strategic working, Lifelink has recently been awarded an East Glasgow CHCP contract and is working as an integrated partner with the East Primary Care Mental Health Team, with all referrals to Lifelink’s community resilience programme coming directly from that Team.



## Future Investments

Lifelink now employs over 60 staff, has a Board of 14 Directors and many other committed volunteers, all contributing to its ongoing success. A well-resourced Board is key, and Isobel Mckinlay, Board Chairperson, highlights the priority given to expertise and training: “Almost all of the Board have experience of using the services, and there are members who have financial and business experience on the Finance Sub-Group. We often use Glasgow CVS for training on finance, decision-making and improving how a Board operates.”

A measure of the organisation’s willingness to embrace change was Lesley Benzie’s study leave to travel to Australia to learn more about community mental health services there. She has used the opportunity to provide new

insights for the organisation: “It gave me the space to think about our own structures, how we might think more strategically and how to develop our staff. One of the services I went to was the Bouverie Centre, a family therapy institute in Melbourne, and I really liked their Single Session Work model. Their Director came here to support us in addressing this. I’ve also developed a greater respect for our work here and what’s so important about what we do.”

It is this fundamental commitment to learning, creativity and innovation that carries Lifelink and its people forward, rallying the resources in these challenging times, and finding effective ways to make a difference to the health and wellbeing of people facing some of life’s biggest challenges.

1. Source: Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organization as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, 19 June - 22 July 1946; signed on 22 July 1946 by the representatives of 61 States (Official Records of the World Health Organization, no. 2, p. 100) and entered into force on 7 April 1948. The definition has not been amended since 1948; view at: <http://www.who.int/suggestions/faq/en/>
2. Source: the World Health Organisation’s Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986), view at: <http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/previous/ottawa/en/index.html>
3. Source of community health information: the Scottish Public Health Observatory and Glasgow Centre for Population Health’s Community Health Profiles – view via: <http://www.scotpho.org.uk/profiles/>

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## Ormlie Community Association: Regeneration That Lasts

**Back in the late nineties, High Ormlie was a small estate of over a hundred grey houses with high black fences, showing all the signs of multiple deprivation and disempowerment.**

“High levels of unemployment, poor housing, lack of investment, lack of facilities had led to a feeling of isolation, desolation and disillusionment amongst the residents.”

### Lorna Simpson

*OCA Manager 2001-March 2010<sup>1</sup>*

Over the last ten years, the Ormlie Community Association (OCA) has been committed to a participatory, community-led approach to creating a healthy community here, both by creating a healthier environment and by improving the wellbeing and confidence of local people. The impact of this work is not only visible for all to see but for all to hear as residents testify to their successes.

“The whole environment has changed here in the space of ten years ... It’s softened by adding curves, to the roads and fences, and colours, by changing the harling from grey to browns and reddy-browns, and bringing in pinks, greens and more greenery.”

**Brian Leonard**, *OCA’s Chairperson*, reflects on the extraordinary level of local commitment to creating change<sup>2</sup>:

“There are no easy, quick fixes and it takes a combination of involvement, cooperation and trust, and a great deal of perseverance over a long period to achieve marked and sustained progress.”



### Into the ‘Health Zone’

Change began through the determination of local people to make a difference. One resident in particular, Colin Punler, was galvanised into action when his child narrowly avoided serious injury from a vehicle when out playing. He and others initially formed the OCA to tackle road safety issues, but then the arrival of Scottish Executive funding via the Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) and a ‘Home Zone’ pilot project, allowed this community to think bigger and plan a wider health improvement and regeneration project.

The starting point for ‘big’ change was a community-led discussion of what needed to happen next. A Planning for Real process<sup>3</sup>, using models and maps, supported local people in articulating their vision of the future, and a great wealth of plans were generated, including:

- traffic-calming on the estate – as part of a Home Zone
- new play areas
- a community centre and an office
- services for children, young people and their families
- upgrading of houses.

### Community-owned and Created

The Scottish Government evaluation<sup>5</sup> of the Home Zone pilot projects records the value of Ormlie’s community-led approach: “community involvement throughout the process has resulted in a strong sense of community ownership of the scheme.”

Similarly the Board’s Vice Chair, Diane Holmes, who has been involved since the early days, makes this same point: “Its not just money, it took people living on this estate to get it going. Lorna Simpson always pointed out that she couldn’t do her job without the volunteers and ‘buy in’ from the community.”

The range of projects is indeed impressive, and their longevity a sign that this participatory approach is sustaining local support; projects include:

- The Magic Circle and The Wavy Wall: a circle of standing stones and a wavy dry stone wall with seating and flowerbeds – both designed with young people.
- Community Mosaic Project: residents of all ages designed mosaics for an ‘outdoor gallery’ along a wall – further work is planned.
- Macaulay View Gardens: a play area was identified by young people as needing improvements, and residents raised funding and located grants to create this garden with large wooden sea monster.
- The Skate Park: state of the art, including a ‘half-pike’ – local children were involved in determining the design, visiting sites and meeting with architects.

### Young Voices Growing Strong

With a new community centre in place, through Sure Start and SIP funding, the OCA was able to focus on other strands of its community-led approach to health improvement, in particular, work with children, young people and their families.

### Children First

Ormlie’s ‘CPP’ project – short for Community Partners Programme – for children and young people (from 7-15) began as a partnership with Save the Children in Scotland. The aim of the work was to make sure children and young people get their individual and collective voices heard within the community and to support their participation in a wide range of community activities.

The CPP project has stayed the distance and is currently funded through Children in Need, Highland Council and Lloyds TSB funding. It provides sessions for between 50-60 children each week. There’s a varied mix of projects: for instance, growing healthy foods in the greenhouse and planters – e.g. strawberries, peas; the summer and Easter workshop programmes of arts, sports and trips; a drop-in computer session; and volunteering, with older children helping younger groups and supporting local charities.

The project continues to focus on children’s rights, using the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as their backdrop. Participatory approaches ensure that the children are fully involved in planning activities and, recently, in interviewing for a new worker.

### Flourishing

The Young Mothers Project works with mothers from across Thurso to support the well being of both the mothers and their children. Claire and Samantha, who work with the group of currently 30 members, have seen relationships between ‘the mums’ and other services improve through their programme. A course over six weeks with the health visitor, for instance, allowed members to get to know her better and improved communication.

Group members Fiona and Julie describe the range of activities they’ve organised: first aid training; healthy-eating and exercise; fun days – from rounders to day-trips; and discussion of parenting and child development. Julie was keen to learn more about self-defence so an

instructor met with them to share techniques. The kids play in the crèche at the Centre, allowing the mothers to concentrate on their group.

The success of this project has now led on to the development of a 'Teenage Mothers' Group'.



### Reclaiming the Streets

Greenspaces, such as parks, gardens and play areas, have been shown by international research to improve physical health, mental health and the quality of community activity<sup>4</sup>. In Ormlie local people were keen to improve the quality of their estate. Their Home Zone and related work includes:

- traffic-calming measures such as 'winding' streets, speed bumps and off-road parking, as well as improved lighting to give people, confidence to walk around after dark.
- adding colours and textures through changing the harling to browns and reds; shifting to blue and green wavy fencing; and adding flowers, trees and art – creating an attractive estate, strikingly different from the previous greys and blacks.
- quality greenspaces and play areas - creating places for all to enjoy together.

Housing, and so health, has also been improved by OCA establishing Caithness Energy Advice to work on home insulation and heating across the estate and further afield. This project is now based in central Thurso and works across the Highlands.

### Growing Up with the CPP

Daniel, Kayleigh and Arlene, long-time members of the CPP project, are now in their mid-teens and have moved on to the Friday Night Club: "This is the best: TV, loud music, laptops, snooker and karaoke."

They've worked on many CPP activities over recent years: helping with the design of the Wavy Wall and Macaulay View garden; working with people with disabilities living nearby; and helping with the summer and Easter workshops. Their confidence in participating has grown ...

**Daniel:** "My hands (handprints) are on two walls, and I went to London as well because of the Wavy Wall to get a prize. This year me and Michael advertised in the 'Ormlie Blah' as gardeners and got loads of jobs. We've cut grass, mended fences, pressure-hosed and made some money – we'll do it again next April."

**Kayleigh:** "We should have our own opinions. Usually it might be the Council that just does things, but up here we have our say ... and sometimes we get it to happen. Me and Daniel wrote a letter so that we could get funding for a Monday Night Group too."

**Arlene:** "I've done planting vegetables, sunflowers, potatoes, cabbages, lettuces and peas with the younger ones, and gained a Young Volunteers' Certificate for 180hrs of volunteering work. At the AGM every group speaks about something and I usually speak there ... we're not scared of asking questions."

### Life Changing

A talk from Home-Start Caithness, which offers support to families under stress, inspired Fiona, and she's now been volunteering with them for one and a half years. This has given her the chance to develop skills in an area of work that interests her, and she's now registered for a childcare course at college. She describes the impact of her involvement with the group as "Life changing: the group has made us all more confident".

Following a presentation from the local college, Julie is now considering training as a car mechanic when her children are older. Currently she's active in the Association's Junk2Funk project (see below) and making her own furniture. "My Wednesdays and Thursdays are the two days I really look forward to."

### Shared Inspirations

The Association's Junk2Funk project, aimed particularly at young people, supports local people in renovating furniture and household items in an artistic-style. Bettine Bain and Diane Holmes coordinate, sourcing materials through charity shops and donations, and bringing new ideas to the group to keep it fresh and dynamic. The results are stunning ... placemats, mirrors, fire place, guitars, tables ... and they've held an exhibition at the Caithness Exhibition Centre.

Local resident Dan Black finds the process very creative: getting people talking and working together really helps, and he's looking to exhibit his work more widely. He sees the bigger picture for this project and the Association: "There's massive hidden unemployment: our society says there's a job for everybody, yet significant numbers of people are marginalised. Here, community gives purpose. I'm an evangelist for this approach, and it's

turned me around. It's good to have faith in people. Now we're out of the dark days but we don't want people to drift away."

### Learning for Future Success

The Association has travelled far and has many successes to its name. It's won Awards including one from the Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum (SURF) and another from the British Urban Regeneration Forum (BURA). Helen Allan, the Association's Acting Manager has been involved from the start, firstly as a Highland Council community education worker and then as a Board member, and she has seen the impact OCA has had: "Ten years of change: it's a nicer place to be. Kids have been growing up here over the last ten years and are still living here – it keeps the place grounded."

The learning has been immense, as its recent publication *Swings and Roundabouts: the highs and lows of a community association*<sup>6</sup>, written by former Chair Robert Sutherland, demonstrates. Now it is sharing this learning with wider audiences. Diane Holmes, for instance, was part of their delegation to Holland for a Home Zone conference, and now gives presentations widely: at the Highland Tenants' Conference last year and at the Scottish Executive to an audience of 70 ... "a challenge, that takes you out of your comfort zone."



## A New Dawn

The OCA now has core funding for a new manager, and the next few years will be challenging. They have an expertise in community development to build from. Their planning wheel has come full circle. The goals of their original Planning for Real work ten years ago have been achieved, so they are embarking on developing a new community plan. “There’s lots of things we could do” says Helen Allan, “but we need to make sure they are what the community wants.”



### Building Enterprise

#### Charles Findlay

*Development Manager*

*Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)*

It has taken a major effort from the Association, who have engendered the support of the local community, and between them made a major impact. It is generally accepted that in lacking basic facilities the Ormlie estate was demoralised and, that now, through the work of OCA and the participation of the community, it has become a very positive place to live. OCA is a very important resource to the immediate community, and their work ties in with Scottish Government policies on health inequalities.

HIE continues to have a remit to strengthen communities and within that social enterprise is a key focus. Some social enterprises, for example recycling ventures, lend themselves more easily to commercial development in support of their social purpose. With organisations such as OCA who focus on social development this can be more difficult. However, OCA’s experience and success in delivering significant projects can provide a basis to develop their commercial activities and become more self-sustaining – although we don’t underestimate the difficulties associated with this approach.

We are working with OCA as an account-managed social enterprise to assist them to deliver a company growth plan, helping them develop new income streams and become less grant dependent. This could, for example, in terms of the social services they seek to provide, be contracted through service level agreements; these allow both parties to measure performance and this can encourage greater confidence and commitment. Typically, grants will now be harder to get, and the next 12 months will be very important – with the public spending review things will get tougher.

OCA are to receive European/Highland LEADER funding which, together with match-funding from their own resources, will allow them to appoint a Development Manager for two years to focus on this new approach. This doesn’t mean that their core values are going to change: it’s more about the manner of funding and the questions they ask themselves.

By taking an inclusive, community-led and health improvement approach to their work, the Association has brought on board the energies and commitment of local people. It’s crucial to the future health of the estate that they continue to build on their successes, and that their partners locally and nationally continue to back their work.

Vice Chair Diane Holmes sums up their hopes for the future: “The way I see it, we’re benefitting right now, but the best is yet to come. Children in the CPP are learning about respect for their community, and they are going to pass that on.”

- 1 From: Swings and Roundabouts: the highs and lows of a community association. An introduction (p5) from former OCA Manager Lorna Simpson
- 2 From: Swings and Roundabouts: the highs and lows of a community association. Chairman’s Overview (p4)
- 3 For more information on Planning for Real view <http://www.planningforreal.org.uk/planningforreal/default.html>
- 4 See greenspace and quality of life: a critical literature review: <http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/upload/File/Exec%20summary%20greenspace%20and%20quality%20of%20life%20lit%20review%20aug2008.pdf>
- 5 See Transport Research Series: Home Zones in Scotland: evaluation report: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/194895/0052348.pdf>
- 6 For a copy of Swings and Roundabouts contact the Ormlie Community Association office

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## Wester Hailes Health Agency

# Growing Healthy Community Assets



**The Wester Hailes Health Agency (WHHA) continues the now long-standing tradition within Wester Hailes of working with local people to tackle health and other inequalities. The organisation provides a wide variety of services within the community, and in these times of increasing financial hardship continues to work innovatively through local partnerships and to ensure that the voices of local people are reflected in its strategic work with health services and the local authority.**

Wester Hailes is a peripheral Edinburgh housing estate of about 9000 residents. There are high levels of social housing, and the scale of the health challenges faced by this community is demonstrated by the nature and extent of health and other inequalities, for example<sup>1</sup>:

- unemployment levels at least twice that of the Edinburgh average
- low levels of educational attainment – the percentage of those without any qualification is almost double that of the whole of Edinburgh
- infant mortality is almost one and a half times the Edinburgh average
- cardio-vascular disease is almost twice the level of more affluent areas of the City.
- high incidences of mental ill health with, significant differences from Edinburgh as a whole for levels of self harm, depression as well as drug and alcohol dependency.

### Good Values

The Agency was formed in 1998 through the merging of the Wester Hailes Health Project and the Stairway Mental Health Project. Linda Arthur, the Manager since then, describes their philosophy as a holistic model of health, informed by a community development approach, so keeping the emphasis on the active involvement and priorities of local people. This ethos underpins the other key strand of their thinking, partnership-working with both statutory agencies and other third sector organisations.

This ongoing philosophy provides the bedrock of the organisation's development, and its current Business Plan 2008-11 brings them to bear on its six strategic objectives:

- addressing health inequalities
- promoting healthy lifestyles
- improving individual mental well-being
- supporting access to information and resources
- offering services and therapies
- working strategically.

### Community 'Born and Led'

The organisation remains rooted within the community, in particular with its commitment to local people on its Board which provides clear direction for its work, based on local needs and priorities. This sustains the organisation's reputation locally, maintains trust across the community and giving it a unique position from which to speak on local health priorities.

The views and concerns of local people are further articulated through a variety of methods and approaches, including both rapid participatory appraisal<sup>2</sup> and drawing on more traditional research. e.g. such as clinical evidence relating to the incidence of diabetes. These are then used to support the development of the local Neighbourhood Health Plan – see final section for more on this. The issues raised, such as community safety concerns, the impact of addictions and the level of diabetes type 2, would have remained hidden without such research, and services can now be developed in response to locally identified needs and priorities and delivered in partnership with the community and local organisations.

The Agency's extensive range of services, established over the last decade, include:

- Dietetic service provided by a community dietician: includes 1 to 1 and groupwork on healthy-eating, cooking, weight-reduction and advice for those with type 2 diabetes.
- Mental health and substance misuse services: counselling, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and solution-focused therapy.
- Groups: including the Carers Group, Drop-ins, Anxiety Management, and the Women's Group.
- Complementary therapies: including massage, reflexology and shiatsu.
- Volunteering opportunities: for example, the Community Gardening Project, the Green Gym and the Time Bank.
- Physical activities: Tai Chi, the Walking Group, Pilates, Aqua Fit, Men's Jogging Group, as well as rock-climbing, and sailing.

### Our Social Capital

The Agency's community-led health approach facilitates the building of 'social capital': local people are supported in making a wide range of connections and links with others and other organisations, which in turn develops their confidence, sense of purpose and self-esteem. In particular, this way of working enables people to contribute to positive change in their community through volunteering and other 'in-kind' activities.

Through its focus on social capital, the WHHA and its partners have taken the lead in Edinburgh in the development of time-banking. This work was originally developed in the USA by Dr Edgar S. Cahn<sup>3</sup> as an alternative 'currency': he reasoned that if there was not enough traditional money to support a community's ability to provide its own services then why not create 'new money' to pay people for what needed to be done?

The approach is now recognised and applied internationally. The first UK Time Bank was established in 1998, and it involves people using their time as a currency; an hour of time given to someone else earns a time credit that can be exchanged for an hour of someone else's time. All skills are valued in this same way, and often include gardening, painting, shopping, accounting, tutoring and household repairs.

Back in 2008, a steering group was established by Wester Hailes Health Agency, Prospect Community Housing Association, EVOC, the Edinburgh Volunteer Centre and other partners from the West Edinburgh Voluntary Sector Forum to explore setting-up a local Time Bank. An exploratory visit to Castlemilk Timebank encouraged the steering group to go ahead and appoint two 'time-brokers' to coordinate the project, and the West Edinburgh Time Bank, the first in Edinburgh, was launched in August 2009. It goes from strength-to-strength, currently has 40 members and is supported by 12 local organisations.



## Timebanking

### Tracey Lee

*Time-broker and Board Member*

We've 40 members signed-up with varied skills: gardening, sowing, DIY, painting and decorating, knitting and cooking. In the summer, gardening is popular, along with painting and decorating and the DIY.

Some people come along and say, "Look, I've no skills at all" ... but everyone has something to offer: companionship or helping with getting people to hospital appointments, for instance. We use our imaginations with people's interests, hobbies and talents. There are no average members: one person has worked-up 40+ credits in a year, some others, one or two credits.

Being a member of the Time Bank encourages 'neighbourliness'. The social side plays a big part and members feel better connected. We've two groups: a 'Knitting Group' where people earn time credits and knit for a charity working for orphaned Ugandan children; and a 'Theatre Group' that meets four times a year and goes to the Edinburgh Fringe.

Further funding would really help with a paid post, then we could expand and have other sites in South-West Edinburgh: presently, we're completely dependant on volunteers.

I've attended Time Bank training and met with those involved in Time Banks in Scotland and the north of England. We've had a visit too from Juliane from the Napa Time Bank in California. She was travelling with a colleague and they came along and sang to our members: there was a very good turn out of members, and the afternoon was greatly enjoyed by all.

## The Fruits Of Social Capital

Community gardening and related activities have been supported by the Agency for nearly five years now, as Stuart Sheriff, a key volunteer, explains: "It started with us tidying-up the back. We then made a memorial garden, through a raised bed, for people who want to remember someone. It's a nice place to chill: in the summer, with the trees, you could almost be anywhere."

Stuart enjoys working with others, discussing and planning what they are going to do next. Different people with varied interests and abilities have become involved, and so new directions have therefore been generated: growing vegetables, then flowers, a wildlife garden and so on; now, there's talk of a sensory garden. The project won the 2007 Evening News sponsored Best Community Garden. Meanwhile Stuart has undertaken training down at the Royal Botanical Gardens' nursery: "I enjoyed it: it was stressful, but I learned lots of bits and pieces."

This area of working continues to stimulate other opportunities: there's now a community orchard, allotments and tree-planting; improvements at Quarry Park and along the Union Canal to enhance the area's greenspaces; and plans for an environmental arts project. A Green Gym has been started to link exercise, the environment and improving mental health. WHHA Manager Linda Arthur points out that although these activities are not traditional therapies, they are proving highly therapeutic!

There's also a walking group Its Good to Walk, which provides opportunities from short walks up to the more strenuous and challenging. The Agency has recently won the Active Communities Award in the first ever Physical Activity and Health Alliance Active Factor Awards Scheme, which recognises projects that increase physical activity and reduce health inequalities. The organisation's programme used the Living Streets Scotland toolkit Reclaim Your Streets to promote a more pedestrian-friendly area.

## A Lifeline and an Opportunity

### Larry Liddle

*Volunteer and recent Board member*

This place is my lifeline, and for a lot of others too: the garden, the counselling, the massage and the walking group. I've done training too, for my European Computer Driving License at the University Annex and for the Board, which boosts your confidence. When we have the annual Open Day in late summer, it's mobbed and you see just how many people use this space. You get the feeling people would like more.

I started coming along 12 years ago as I have osteoporosis and suffer a lot of back pain. I volunteer in the garden helping tidy up and composting, as my health allows. I was on the Board for a while: there were hard decisions to make; stopping smoking in the 'Smoking Room' and closing one of the Drop-ins because of funding cuts. It made me realise what the staff have to deal with. It's a real worry that with funding cuts, the place may close – we're not really sure what's happening.

## Let's Talk Strategy

Projects that build social capital, such as the Time Bank and the Walking Group, are not purely the work of the Agency and its members, but are put together in partnership with other organisations through a local steering group, and by using local connections, resources and the strengths of each partner.

This partnership-working with local organisations and groups is being extended further through the WHHA's strategic approach, both locally and City-wide. It is an active member of the Edinburgh West Voluntary Sector Forum, and builds links with local councillors and MSPs of all political persuasions. 120 people attended the Agency's last AGM, including local people, local groups, organisations, and local politicians.

The organisation is also committed to the development of the South Edinburgh Public Partnership Forum, which works to give local organisations and people a stronger voice within the NHS Community Health Partnership. They have seen local people becoming more 'politicised', with a small 'p', and are instrumental in supporting people in becoming more aware of what's available and influencing decisions that affect their lives.



The organisation is also involved in a number of other strategic forums including the South-West Edinburgh Inequalities Group which comprises third sector organisations and statutory agencies, and which supports the development of the Neighbourhood Health Plan that sets out local health priorities. Bringing local views into these plans through the Agency's participatory research, demonstrates its value to the City Council and the Health Board in meeting the Single Outcome Agreement for the City.

Another key arena in which they are involved is the Lothian Community Health Projects' Forum, which brings together organisations delivering community development approaches – community-led health – to health improvement. This helps to ensure their engagement with City-wide strategies; for instance, recognising the links of their own Community Gardening and Green Gym initia-

tives to the Edinburgh: Greening Edinburgh for Health through Community and Therapeutic Gardening action plan.

The Agency has established a diverse range of projects and partnerships to address health inequalities in its area. Staying true to its long-standing traditions and values, it continues to generate further opportunities for local people and groups to develop social capital. Current national policy drivers focus on asset-based health improvement and the co-production of services and so offer significant opportunities for the WHHA to build on its previous successes in community-led health and the generating of social capital. However, in facing this most challenging of times, there is a requirement for appropriate strategic support and resourcing to enable the organisation to continue to have this critical and positive impact on the lives of many people in Wester Hailes.



## Healthy Partnership Working

### Caroline Muir

*Community Projects Officer with Prospect Community Housing Association in Wester Hailes*

Prospect was set up by local people in response to poor housing conditions in the area, and our strength remains our local committee. I've been with the Housing Association for the last two and a half years, and my role goes beyond our core work of housing to wider community benefits, healthier, more confident people. It's a natural progression for us to work on projects with others in the area.

Most recently we've been supporting the Time Bank project, we're part of the steering group, which is about people gaining confidence and feeling useful. This may not have happened to them before and so it's important to celebrate the skills in the neighbourhood and build its social capital. We're also involved in the steering group for the Walking Group and helped raised funding its first year through the Pfizer Health Foundation.

The Health Agency has specialist skills and networks on the ground, as do we, and it benefits us both to work together.

1. Source: Wester Hailes Health Agency Business Plan 2008-11; original sources 2001 UK Census and various local health research studies.
2. Rapid Appraisal is a technique developed for participatory appraisal with local communities. For more information view, for instance, the Communities Scotland archive at: [http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/scrcs\\_006724.hcsp](http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/scrcs_006724.hcsp)
3. For more on time-banking and its history, view: <http://www.timebanking.org/history.html>

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## Yipworld.com

# The dynamic yipworld.com...

**Energy levels at yipworld.com, originally the Youth Information Project, certainly hit you as you walk through the main door: a wall of sound from young people busy in a multitude of summer activities and the vitality of the staff in action.**

Sited in the East Ayrshire town of Cumnock, population almost 10,000, and having completed 10 successful years, yipworld.com has extensive experience of working with young people to improve health and wellbeing. It's also eager to use its expertise to extend its reach and to generate income to sustain its future.

### In the Beginning...

Janice Hendry, Development Director, provides an action-packed summary of its first decade. yipworld.com was born out of a small project providing advice to young people (14+). The arrival of East Ayrshire Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) proved decisive, and Janice was approached by the local authority and saw the opportunity to work with young people in innovative ways. A Business Plan was developed, stakeholders identified, and soon after in 2000 the project launched a daily programme of evening and weekend Drop-in services for juniors (8-12 years) and seniors (up to age 17). The first day was phenomenal, with 400 young people from Cumnock and the surrounding area arriving – a very concrete demonstration of the need!

yipworld.com, energised by early success, then prepared for an even busier and more successful future. They explored fuller use of their building during the day-time, and Big Lottery funding enabled them to start an 'Out of School' service for children and young people of school age; a £1 charge per place per day put extra monies into the organisation to support new activities. Since then the options and opportunities to support young people and their health and wellbeing have grown and grown.



### Definitely the Young People's World

While its social entrepreneurial instincts have fuelled the dynamism of the organisation and the achievements of the young people and the staff, this alone cannot explain its strength and direction. Through consistently listening and engaging with young people, the Board and Staff Team are in touch with the needs and aspirations of this next generation. Ongoing dialogue with young people, and direct reports to the Board by the Young People's Committee, ensures the development of relevant programmes, shaping activities and services such as the Senior and Junior Drop-ins. Staff training on child development ensures a depth of understanding that informs their creative approaches to a range of activities.

The organisation also now works with schools throughout East Ayrshire. Through skilled listening and learning, the organisation is able to work with a wide range of young people and the wider community in the development of services that support health and wellbeing, and which work to tackle health inequalities – see Inspiring Scotland case-study on page 38.

### Healthy Growth – Yipworld.com's Expanding 'Portfolio'

**Training:** Rural Challenge Fund monies allowed them to establish a training company Global Training and become accredited for assessing and verifying with the SQA (Scottish Qualification Authority), and likewise for the European Computer Driving Licence.

**The TARDIS:** Funding from BBC Children in Need, the Camelot Foundation and Communities Scotland as well as sponsorship supported the development of the TARDIS (Training and Recreation Delivered in Situ), a large van with satellite provision for the Internet, packed to the gunnels with equipment including laptops, to provide a base for yipworld.com to take its successful 'drop-in formula' out into other villages and communities further afield.



**Inspiring Scotland 14:19:** working with young people struggling at school to build their skills and then help them decide on whether to return to the classroom or go onto college or training – see the case-study on page 38.



**PULSE:** a recording studio has been added, and through the Scottish Government's Curriculum for Excellence, staff have worked with St. Joseph's Academy with young people in the More Choice More Chance cohort, and in partnership with Ayr College are currently training five students from Auchinleck Academy for the National Progression Award Level 6 in Sound Engineering.

**Drop-in Development:** The Senior Drop-in now provides a complex programme through monthly themes relating to health and wellbeing, including careers, a virtual baby/parenthood programme, the environment, and health and fitness, to fit with the Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement.

## Inspiring Scotland 14:19: 'More Choices More Chance'

Kelly McCaffrey works with young people on a programme that yipworld.com provides across schools in Ayrshire through Inspiring Scotland funding. Schools refer young people who are in the 'intermediate stage' of disengaging from education.

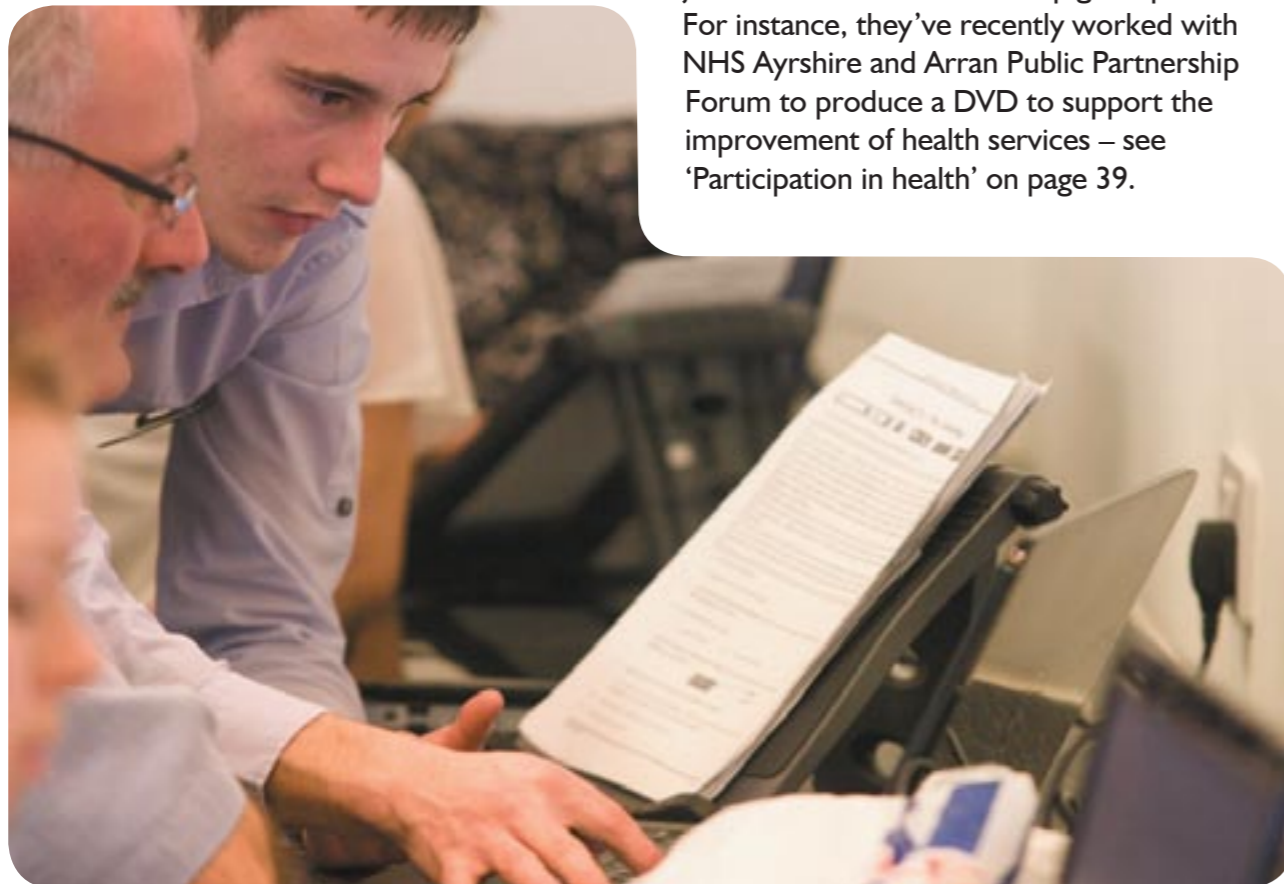
Kelly says: "We're looking to re-engage them with school, college or training, and we'll work one-to-one or in groups on the SQA core skills of online learning, communication, working with others, problem-solving and numeracy; and provide workshops on drugs, alcohol and social pressure. We're not professional teachers, but professional in our role, so simply talking with young people is key and helps to breakdown barriers."

The programme is very flexible and builds confidence by providing and supporting the young people in tackling challenges. Kelly recently took six people from different schools to London: they went by plane, saw the sights and a show, and made friendships. It's about building a 'confident generation', and through opportunities like this young people can broaden their horizons, building their confidence and aspirations.

## Good Practice, Good Thinking

Engagement with young people and the wider community is intrinsic to yipworld.com's approach to a community-led health model. They prioritise a reflective approach to their work and access resources provided by the Community Health Exchange, including the newsletter CHEX-point and e-bulletin Snippets, which are circulated across the team and keep their practice up-to-date. This enables them to work constructively in partnership with other local agencies, and to contribute to

joint resources which develop good practice. For instance, they've recently worked with NHS Ayrshire and Arran Public Partnership Forum to produce a DVD to support the improvement of health services – see 'Participation in health' on page 39.



## Participation in Health

A group from the Junior Drop-in worked with Roxanne, a volunteer at yipworld.com, and a filmmaker to create a DVD to promote the NHS Ayrshire and Arran Public Partnership Forum (PPF). Two of the young people, Danielle and Robbie, explained that their play tells both adults and children about how the PPF can help them.

Danielle added: "It was good fun: we had to get a partner and we did wee scenes talking about why the hospital might be closing. The PPF can help you find out about things like that."

Robbie enjoyed the launch: "It was at Cumnock Academy, and we went along with our families and some VIPs. There was a good buzz. We want the PPF to be more popular."

This accessible, light-hearted DVD is now being used to promote the PPF, a body of local people that helps plan healthcare services with the local Community Health Partnership.



The personal development of their staff and young people is a top priority at yipworld.com, emphasising their community commitment. Darren Gavin is now Senior Drop-in Development worker for the project, but not so long ago he was a young person himself, participating in the Senior Drop-in. He then became a volunteer and, after further education and other employment, started doing sessional work at the Centre. The organisation has been crucial to his development – "Absolutely great".

Operational Manager, Tracey Campbell, sees this commitment as fundamental to the organisation, and outlines some opportunities offered to staff: there's a staff reading group, two team development days a year, and staff are encouraged to take up SVQs and other training – one person is currently doing a degree. Tracey herself has seen her role develop from working with young people, to training provision, and then on into management: "Our people see others learning and they want to do something. It's catching, and then it passes onto the young people. People here feel they are valued and celebrated, and it gives us a buzz."

This commitment to local people and the locality is clearly part of the Board's perspective too. Treasurer Stewart Birrell runs a local business and his children have been involved in the project: "I live and work locally and can pop in if I'm needed. Our Board is diverse so if a problem crops up we can find the expertise we need."

## Strong Role Models

yipworld.com has been funded by Ayrshire LEADER and the Coalfield Regeneration Trust to create a training project Men into Childcare aimed at supporting young men (16-22) in learning childcare skills. Training Manager Alan Gray explains that this is the first such initiative in the West of Scotland and will help participants to learn life-skills and gain a qualification too.

Two students, Craig and Lee, speak knowledgeably of what they've learned so far. Craig describes the areas covered: childcare, child protection, bullying, code of conduct, assertiveness workshop, fire safety workshop – he's considering youth work. Lee is looking to work with disabled and autistic children, and the course is increasing his confidence in himself to do just this.

Alan is networking with relevant organisations in the area: "There are tremendous benefits for them and the community in having men who can provide really strong male role models: some students may decide "it's not for me," but they are still improving their employability."



## Securing the Future

yipworld.com is a voluntary sector organisation, but its passion is the 'social enterprise' model. Its annual turnover is around £450,000 of which about £125,000 comes from its local authority grant, and the rest from a mix of earned income and other grants. Development Director and founder of yipworld.com Janice Hendry sees both business and social thinking as crucial to their approach: "We're a business with social aims and objectives. We keep our eye on the books and we use 'full cost recovery'."

With ten years experience under their social enterprise belt, yipworld.com has many valuable lessons to share ...

Evaluation: yipworld.com employed consultants EKOS to undertake an independent evaluation. Janice recalls it as a demanding but critical process: "This is 'your baby' so it's difficult, but you've got to be open."

Key learning included the need to extend their activities beyond Cumnock and its locality, leading to the development of their TARDIS project (see 'Healthy growth' page 37).

They also identified the need for an Operational Manager to allow a new role of Development Director to be created too. In this latter role Janice now concentrates on securing funding, financial governance, sustainability planning, networking and advertising, as well as more generally the overall responsibility of yipworld.com and reporting to the Board of Directors – which includes very experienced business representatives from the local community, parents, partner organisations and advisors from public sector.

Awards: yipworld.com has entered a number of award schemes and finds value in the thinking and networking involved in such processes. In 2009, the organisation won the Ayrshire Business in the Community Award for Social Economy and Janice was overall winner of the Youthlink Scotland Youth Worker of the Year Award and Voluntary Sector Manager of the Year Award.

## All Part of the Strategy

Working within the framework of Community Planning to meet strategic targets has been crucial. yipworld.com contributes to delivering on Community Plan outcomes across all four themes, namely health and wellbeing, lifelong learning, community safety and community regeneration. They also support the East Ayrshire Children's Service Plan's commitments to the Curriculum of Excellence.

The organisation is also active within the quarterly Community Planning Forums, helping to set priorities for the future and reviewing plans and achievements. In addition, it provides the local authority with a vital vehicle for engaging with a wide cross-section of young people, researching their views and concerns, and gaining their active support in finding solutions.

Councillor Douglas Reid, Chair of the Community Planning Partnership states: "yipworld.com is an excellent project: they're well-respected and develop best practice; they're developing as a social enterprise; they grow their young people and staff; and they take an holistic approach, delivering on a wide range of Community Plan outcomes."

1. see [www.inspiringscotland.org.uk](http://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk)

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Building on their Inspiring Scotland 14:19 work with young people, and the expertise and funding that has become available to them through this work, they are now pursuing their next 'big idea', A Big Bag of Quality Learning. This very exciting training initiative will integrate all their training expertise with an SQA qualification to provide an employability training package leading to a Level 4 employment award. This will be launched very soon and will contribute to increasing their earned income by taking their services into other areas of Scotland.

There is no holding yipworld.com back. They combine a rare mix of community energy, knowledge and expertise allied with a clear strategic vision and a restless determination to succeed. They are very much focused on "standing up for this community" ... and they've got the drive and commitment to do just that.



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