

Neighbourhood Networks



Annual Report 2017

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Our Vision

“Our network Members are connected to their communities, sharing their skills and talents and following their dreams - together anything is possible.”

Our Mission

“Through local networks of mutual support, we will work with people in their neighbourhoods to deliver the support they require to live independently in their own homes, and to contribute to their communities.”

Our Values

The Vision and Mission of Neighbourhood Networks is underpinned by the following set of Values:

- 1. Everyone is different and we should all be respected and encouraged to be all we can be**
- 2. Everyone should be encouraged to strive towards their dreams and goals**
- 3. Everyone should have the opportunity, encouragement, support and training to be actively involved in the development of the organisation**
- 4. There should be a healthy balance between responsibility and having time to enjoy life**
- 5. Sharing skills and gifts makes us stronger and more confident**
- 6. Giving and receiving support is important to help us grow**
- 7. We can all be involved in making where we live, work and socialise a better place**
- 8. We feel safer when we have positive, equal relationships with others and this is important to feeling we belong**



Directors Report

2017 has been another eventful year in the life of Neighbourhood Networks. It's been a challenging year but also a year where Members, Staff and Trustees have continued to push their own personal and the organisational boundaries.

In **spring** we said goodbye to colleagues in East Ayrshire as our work in the area came to an end for the time being. We never leave doors shut in Neighbourhood Networks, however, and members have continued to stay linked to friends in Onthank Community Centre by attending a ceilidh there later in the year.

More positively we had our work in East Lothian cemented with the agreement to go ahead and develop a third network in Haddington.

Members of all the networks have continued to enthusiastically support opportunities to make an active contribution to their communities in a myriad of ways including community allotments, arts and crafts sessions, outdoor survival skills, film and audio training and volunteering at the local radio stations to name but a few.



Not to be outdone, the Central Staff team also gave some of their own energy and green fingered skills by volunteering at the Hidden Gardens at the Tramway.

It was no surprise to us then, given the history of community connection and contribution, that we were successful in being awarded another Awards for All Grant in May 2017 for our third Angels and Aeroplanes event, entitled "One Big Drama". Lots of activity and planning is well underway for the event due to take place at the Mitchell Theatre in July 2018

In early **summer** it was also time to take stock of the work we do. A very positive evaluation process was concluded around the work with young people in transition in Midlothian. As always this report was thought provoking around ways to improve the work we do. The report also re-enforced the value of the peer support and the opportunities for building friendships and relationships through membership.

We also undertook a staff survey that was put together by the Staff Council to gather information about people's experience of being employed by Neighbourhood Networks.

One of the lows this year happened in Cumbernauld in summer when member's lost a close friend, Scott Connor. This was a very difficult time for the Networks. Networks however, are places to draw support and strength and everyone pulled together when they needed to most.



In August of this year the Board met for their annual retreat. It was an opportunity to connect four of our new Trustees to the rest of the Board and deepen understanding and connections to the work we do. The retreat was a memorable few days. The Board approved a recommendation to appoint myself and my colleague Adrian McKill into our permanent roles of Director and Deputy Director, respectively.

Day two was an active market place session where staff in the organisation made pitches for organisational growth and development.

This has given Neighbourhood Networks a clearer direction for moving forward in the future. Our report in 2018 should demonstrate some evidence of this work being taken forward.

Autumn got off to a really positive start when we had our annual Care Inspection. This year we were delighted to achieve the highest grades of 6 for both Care and Support and Staffing. A real boost to our colleagues with a well - deserved result.

“We are excited to be launching a much improved and accessible website”

Work began on our new organisational website and we are excited to be launching a much improved and accessible website where we can share our stories and experiences.

A piece of work we also started to develop in **winter** 2017 is the Community Circle in Motherwell. This follows a successful bid for some funding through the Third Sector Interface in the area, VANL. We hope that this work continues to grow and develop in North Lanarkshire with the potential in other areas. Watch this space for updates next year.

To end on **2017**, this year's report has a diverse range of stories that we hope will connect readers to the values of the core of the work we carry out. We also hope that they will provide some inspiration and motivation for self - development and contribution.

Our Values

1. Everyone is different and we should all be respected and encouraged to be all we can be

Recently some of our members, staff and friends participated in kathak dance sessions. We did this as part of our Angels and Aeroplanes project. The sessions gave participants an opportunity to be involved in a focused, creative dynamic project that will have a long-lasting and positive impact on their health and wellbeing. We worked in partnership with Sense Scotland, Hughes School of Dance (Greenock) and Tarang Dance Academy.

The practice sessions inspired people to build on existing friendships and relationships as well as develop new connections and associations. It also created an opportunity for us to build a better and more positive understanding of our individual circumstances, culture, diversity, similarities and differences and to amalgamate and share that.



Members and staff were given an opportunity to engage in a new learning experience in an atmosphere that encouraged social skills and team building. Individuals were proactive in supporting and encouraging each other. We recognised that opportunities like this are what helps us to challenge misconceptions and share skills and personalities in a more equal forum.

Our workshops culminated in a performance at Eastwood Theatre. This gave people an opportunity to showcase their skills to family and friends and gave participants an opportunity to experience a sense of success and achievement.

Our Values

2. Everyone should be encouraged to strive toward their dreams and goals



One of Gordon's main goals for 2017 was to find a job. With the support of Neighbourhood Networks and Gordon's hard work and dedication Gordon is now well on his way to finding his dream job in horticulture.

Gordon volunteers at Amisfield Gardens which has increased his gardening skills and built on his self confidence. With the support of his CLW and Ingeus he successfully secured a place on a NC course in horticulture and garden design. Since this course is based in West Lothian Gordon took the big step of finding a room in the Halls of Residence. This has opened up a

whole new world for Gordon and he has met new friends through this course, who have been able to share their skills and knowledge with each other.

Student life has enabled Gordon to build on his self esteem as he now feels like he is contributing and is going in the direction that he would like to. Gordon has also learned many skills from being part of the network e.g. taking on the role of Net Rep and representing his network at meetings. A combination of Gordon's qualification and the skills that he has gained within the network will enhance his CV going forward.

"he has met new friends through this course, who have been able to share their skills and knowledge with each other."



Our Values

3. Everyone should have the opportunity, encouragement, support and training to be actively involved in the development of the organisation



Staff survey

This year the Staff Council, made up of representatives from across the full spectrum of teams in the organisation, decided to produce a staff engagement survey.

We wanted to check in with our colleagues and how they felt about their experiences working for Neighbourhood Networks and get feedback about things that worked well and other areas we could improve on.

We first sought the help of June Dunlop from In Control Scotland, who shares office space at Dava Street to put our very first “Survey Monkey” together.

We had a good response with over half the staff team taking time to complete the survey online.

We asked colleagues about their experiences of being a staff member using a wide range of questions to gauge their views on:

- * Whether they enjoyed their job or if they had fun at work .
- * Whether people felt good about or valued in their roles.
- * Training opportunities and communication across the organisation as well as to share ideas for cross networking and team building.
- * The core values of the organisation which had the most resonance for team in their work and asked them to tell us where they saw these being demonstrated and where we could improve things.

Staff Survey contd....

There was some really encouraging feedback in that everyone who took part in the survey said they would recommend Neighbourhood Networks as an employer to someone else.

Some other general themes also emerged:

- * People mostly felt valued in their roles but that we could do more to look out for each other and celebrate achievements and success more often.
- * Our colleagues working in Networks seemed to have the most fun at work.
- * We got some very positive feedback about work that had been completed on a staff availability contract which seemed to be helping core staff maintain a better work life balance.
- * People also felt that there had been a positive reduction in the number of emails being sent across the across the organisation.
- * Colleagues also appreciated the training opportunities in the organisation.

Going back to the question of our core values, feedback suggested they all had resonance. We had really good feedback about where people saw these being demonstrated across the organisation.

Can you describe any ways in which you see the values being demonstrated in the organisation?
What areas could be improved?

Comments:

I feel all of the values above are demonstrated by the organisation to an extent as the members and staff are involved in many aspects of the decision making process. However, it's difficult to maintain these values as many of the staff are out in the community with most of their workload being taken up being involved in the members and building relationships with them in a short amount of hours available. While other staff are based in the office and full time are naturally more involved in the decision making process.

*Sharing skills and talents
Listening to challenges
don't frown and put obstacles in the way, look for solution companies is needed at times, Together anything is possible*

Being respected as a member of staff and being accepted for who I am, the members. and members differences and opinions, still being able to make positive connections. I think I would like to discuss more with members, prejudices disabled community) and society to raise awareness and strengthen

Members are encouraged to be as independent as possible, their views are listened to and respected. They are involved in many areas of the organisation and encouraged to share their skills. It does however seem to be the same members who are involved and it would be great to see some new faces taking on roles and

Members are encouraged to offer peer support which helps them to grow and be more confident. Governance training is offered to members who are interested in joining the board which provides the opportunity, encouragement support and training to be actively involved with the development of the organisation.

Members are involved the decision making processes and activities in NN this can always be improved upon.

Can you describe any ways in which you see the values being demonstrated in the organisation?
What areas could be improved?

Comments Cont:

In our values we demonstrate all above. I feel we offer an excellent support service and work well together always sharing our skills and ideas. We have fantastic training and this makes us feel more confident in our job role.

I feel we have a lot of staff who have more to offer. It would be good for all staff to share their abilities and skills to make us a better team within the whole organisation.

All staff have access to outside training courses which is on going and everyone can also access training courses which may be available within their own areas or where particular skills are required

Compassion I feel is really important for the staff as well as the members as we always don't understand each others circumstances. What we say to people and the way we treat people is very important.

One of the things that I noticed at the beginning of my employment was that everyone replied to an email by saying thanks or they expected an email to say that you had completed a particular task. I always felt that if I was asked to do something that I would carry it out to the best of my ability and trusted that I would do the job asked.

Now I know that it is important that you let people know that you have attended to their request as it is not the first time that I have forgotten or missed the email.

The recent 'contract' drawn up regarding managing time from phone etc, shows some commitment to value 2. Joint development days help with values 7,5 and 3. Sometimes it is easier to support others to strive towards their dreams and goals. We very often don't focus this attention to ourselves. 4.

Our Values

4. There should be a healthy balance between responsibility and having time to enjoy life



In keeping with the organisations values, in particular the value relating to striking a balance between responsibility and enjoying life, it was agreed to have a break from the traditional approach to team development, where we would come together around a piece of organisational work . The Neighbourhood Networks central staff team agreed that we would spend some time volunteering. This resulted in us spending a day at the Hidden Gardens in Glasgow. The team had a busy day planting up plants, making compost, replacing gravel on the paths and various other jobs around the garden. We had lunch together in the Yurt which is a traditional round tent covered with skins or felt used by nomadic people in the steppes of central



Asia or, in this case, the south side of Glasgow. After a hard day working in the gardens we went off and had dinner together. A good day was had by all in the fresh air and surprising tranquility of this little haven in the heart of the city.

“The experience helped us all realise that we sometimes need to take time out just to get to know each other as people outside of our work roles”

The experience helped us all realise that we sometimes need to take time out just to get to know each other as people outside of our work roles and that by doing so we will learn to work more effectively as a team in our work roles.

Our Values

5. Sharing skills and gifts makes us stronger and more confident



Members from the Motherwell network decided to host a charity event for Beatson Cancer Charity due to one of our members receiving treatment from the hospital. They got together with other networks from North Lan 1, family, friends, and the community to arrange an entertaining afternoon. Members took a lead role organising the event and connecting with the community. We contacted different groups that are involved in our community. We set up several stalls on the day selling cake and candy that members and friends made, beautiful hand knitting from a local knitting group and Wishaw 3 members sold cards and crafts they had made in their arts & crafts group. We also had an auction thanks to kind donations from Mission Place. A local beautician assisted with a nail bar where member's carried out hand massages and painted nails. It was a fabulous day where members felt valued and developed their skills. We raised £1250 for the Beatson.

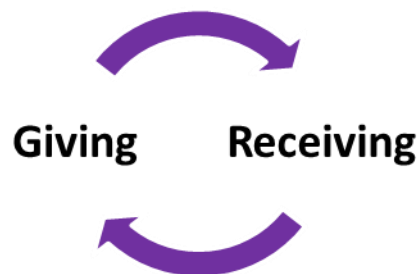
Members reached outcomes from the experience by forming new friendships, being involved in more community participation, learning new life skills and by organising this event, members felt a huge increase in their confidence and self esteem.

A representative from the Beatson visited members to collect the money and thanked members very much for the kind donation. She explained the money would be used for patient and family support. They simply could not make a difference to the lives of so many cancer patients without our support which allows us to help give thousands of people the best possible chance of beating cancer.

Our Values

6. Giving and receiving support is important to help us grow

“Laura also likes to meet up with members from the new transitions network and is keen to support and help out any way she can.”



Laura has come a long way since joining the network in terms of confidence. She was extremely quiet and very shy when first joining the network but has now become a well-liked member of the group who has made many friends. She was very reluctant to travel on public transport, particularly on the train and underground. However since Laura has been travelling on the train with support and has grown in confidence, she now travels by herself to Giffnock and will support another member along to a meet up with the group for dinner every week. Laura also likes to meet up with members from the new transitions network and is keen to support and help out any way she can. Laura gets along with everyone in the group and is very happy to be a part of the preparations for Angels and Aeroplanes. Laura is keen to sing and perform and says she's really excited about the project.



Our Values

7. We can all be involved in making where we live, work and socialise a better place



Amie has been with the network for nearly 2 years now and in that time has made many friends and connections within her community. Amie was very dependent on her Mum for support in getting out and about . Although she still relies on her mum for some transport she has now built a network of support around her in terms of friends who she has met through the network and through her volunteer work . She volunteers weekly at Thornliebank Resource Centre and a local charity shop.

Amie keeps up continued contact with members and attends regular weekly drama, craft and dinner dates among other organised network activities.

Amie also struck up a friendship with fellow network member Stuart and they have now been in a steady relationship for the past year.

Amie describes the network as **“life-changing”**. She continues to thrive and has had to endure poor physical and mental health but claims that she has never felt better due to the support of her network and friends.

Our Values

8. We feel safer when we have positive, equal relationships with others and this is important to feeling we belong

NL2 members have been getting involved in the Community living landscapes/ Wild Ways Well project over the last couple of months.

They are taking part in health walks, walking down into the Cumbernauld Glen, where they have been learning about trees and wildlife that inhabits the glen.

They have learned how to build a campfire, and what they have to think about, safety wise, before they build it, and what to use when building the fire. They have boiled water to make tea coffee or hot chocolate. Members have also toasted marshmallows over the campfire and cooked muffins.

Members have learned to put up windbreakers to shelter themselves and hammocks to relax in.

Members have also learned the importance of tidying up after themselves and leaving the campsite as they found it.

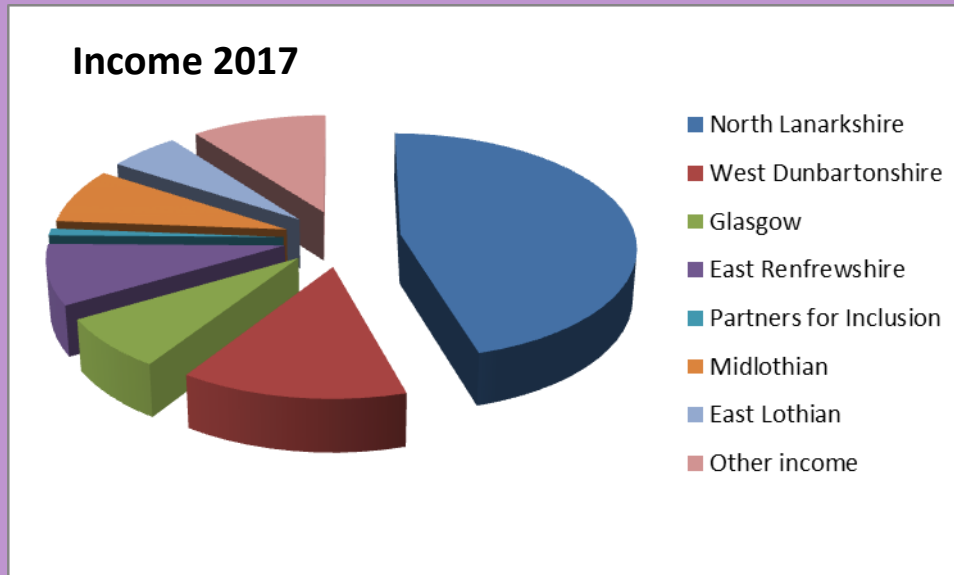
During the experience members have bonded and learned to work as a team looking out for each other and take pride in their community.

Members had been thinking about how to commemorate a member that passed away, and through taking part in this project they decided they are going to plant a tree in Cumbernauld town centre.



Finance Report

Year end results to 31st March 2017



Income increased to £736,242, up by 16.4% compared to 2016. This was the first full year that we operated in Midlothian and East Lothian, where the networks continue to develop well. During 2017, the pilot network in East Ayrshire came to an end. North Lanarkshire remains the local authority with the highest number of networks, providing 46% of income in 2017.

In September 2016 we organised a fundraising event of a zip slide across the River Clyde. The event was very successful and raised £9,986. Grants were received from Children in Need, North Lanarkshire Locality, Scottish Government for SVQ training and Action Earth.

There was a surplus of £30,046 in the year and costs were successfully controlled throughout the year. However, we are committed to paying above the real living wage of £8.25 per hour that was announced in November 2016. There was £298,306 in reserves at 31st March 2017, which represents between four and five months cover of resources expended. Only 1.4% of reserves are restricted and the reserves position is within the OSCR recommendations.

The financial outlook for 2018 is not without challenges but we are in a good position to deal with these and proactive planning will mitigate any difficulties that may arise.

How do I find out more?

There are many ways to find out more about Neighbourhood Networks.

- ♦ You can visit our website at www.neighbourhoodnetworks.org
- ♦ You could also email us at info@neighbourhoodnetworks.org
- ♦ You could also contact our office on 0141 440 1005

We can arrange to send you some information leaflets or arrange for you to meet a member of staff, who can talk to you about Neighbourhood Networks and what we can offer.



@nayburhood



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