



Neighbourhood Networks

Annual Report 2015



**Our members are connected to their communities,
Sharing their skills and talents and following their dreams-
"Together anything is possible!"**

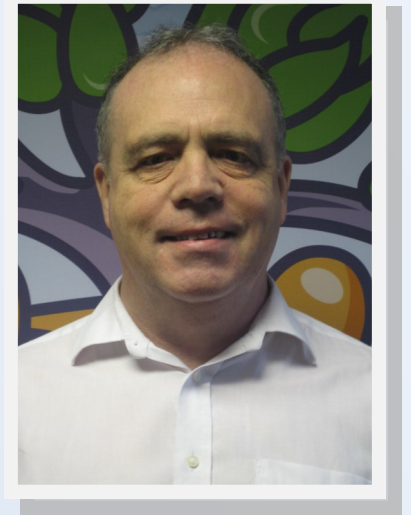


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Summary of the Year 2015

By John Dalrymple (Director)



2015 saw several big changes in the life of Neighbourhood Networks:

- ♦ we moved to a lovely, bright, new (and much more spacious) office in Dava Street having been based in nearby Brand Street from our earliest days;
- ♦ we consolidated our work in North Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire, and East Renfrewshire;
- ♦ sadly, we stopped working in Edinburgh, but started working in Midlothian;
- ♦ we said goodbye to Erin and David who had worked with us for several years, but were glad to welcome Jasmina (our new Community Living Worker in Airdrie) and Tracy (our new Office Manager);
- ♦ we also welcomed Susan Sim to the organisation, our first Development Manager in many years

The fruits of Susan's labours are already evident, and in the year ahead we are look forward to developing new networks in several parts of the country, in the new environment of health and social work integration, with all the fresh opportunities it creates.

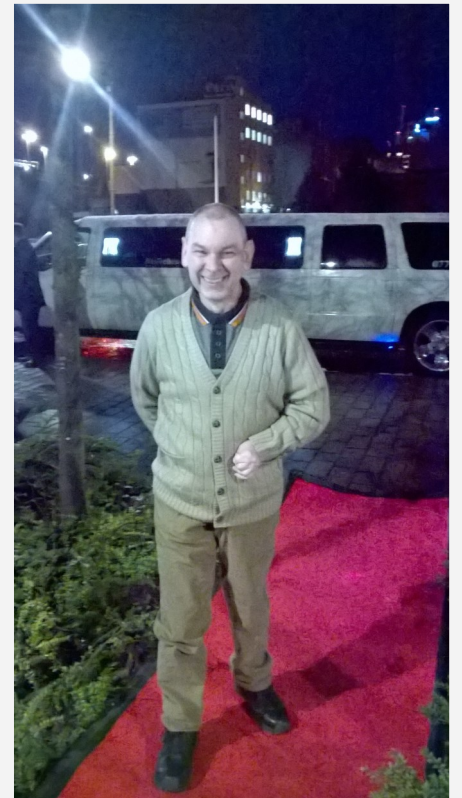
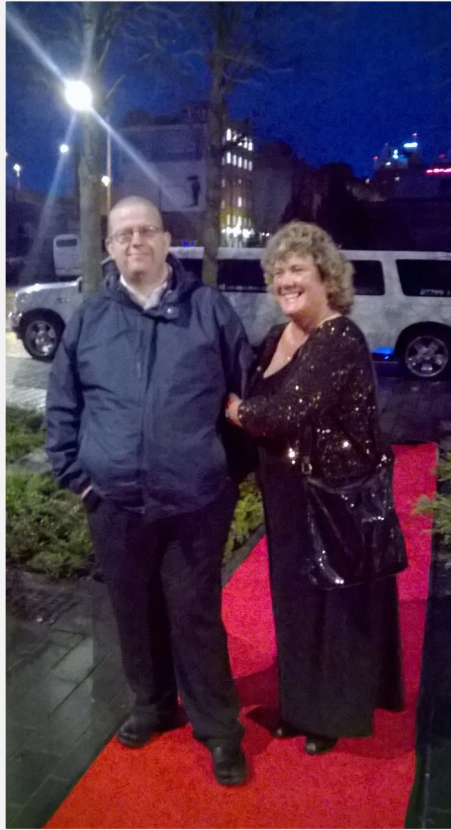
2016 also marks the 15th anniversary of the founding of Neighbourhood Networks through the determination of people like Pat Black, Doreen Kelly and the late Carl Poll (who some ten years earlier had founded our sister organisation, KeyRing, in London). Pat, Doreen and Carl shared the vision that men and women in communities across Scotland would benefit greatly from opportunities to establish new friendships, to lend others their support and encouragement, and to make real contributions to the neighbourhoods where they live.

That founding vision has been carefully nurtured over subsequent years by former colleagues such as Rebecca Allen and Rachel Ball; by current colleagues like Heather Calvo, Dee McIntosh, Donna Muir, Adrian Mckill and Theresa Strain, whose years of quiet but passionate commitment to the work of the organisation are well into double figures; by the consistency of our stalwart partners in local authorities; and, most importantly of course, by countless network members, too numerous to name, who have shown the generosity of spirit to enrich each others lives.

To mark this special anniversary we are having a big birthday party on 7th May this year. I hope you will look out for details of this event in the weeks ahead, and that you will make a point of coming to join us to celebrate all that has been achieved thus far.

January 2015

Community Counts



To kick off another busy year Neighbourhood Networks hosted the “**Community Counts**” event on the Renfrew Ferry one chilly evening in January. Members and staff pulled together in a working group to organise the glamorous evening. Guests put on their glad rags, tuxedos, tiaras and fur coats (fake of course) and walked the red carpet down onto the gangplank. There was even a limousine to try on for size. Guests all had a lovely meal together; caught up with old friends and got to

polish up their new Strictly Come Dancing moves.

The event, however, was also about storytelling and to celebrate achievements. Every Network area got the chance to tell their story or perform something to get the message across about the difference that membership makes. There was also an opportunity for people to buy the **Community Counts** Book filled with stories of individual and network achievements.

January 2015

Community Counts continued

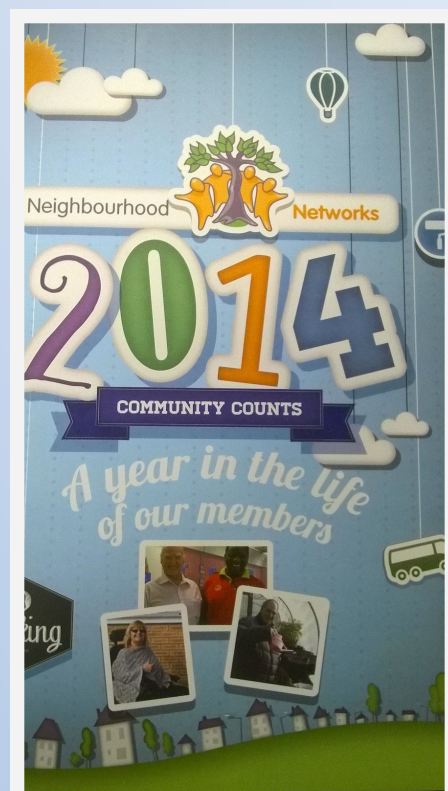


The social media group and newsletter team got together and buddied up to interview the revelers at the party, take photographs and tweet live updates throughout the celebration. We developed some new skills over the course of the evening and now have a valuable bank of photographs, interviews and films to remind us of what was a fantastic evening. It certainly was a lively way to start the New Year.

We also had some special guests at the event from the Care Inspectorate Hub. They had come along specifically to film



Neighbourhood Networks as pioneers in Social Care. This film which demonstrates innovative practice in supported living was recently published on the Care Inspectorate Hub. You can see this film at: <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/innovation/neighbourhood-networks-in-scotland/> and watch the celebration in full swing!



February 2015

The Neighbourhood Echo

In the last year we have transformed the member's newsletter into the brand new and much improved Neighbourhood Echo! Ryan, a journalist student helped us to create the smart new look. At the first meeting interested members decide what we would like to see in the next edition. Members of the group then agree to take on jobs such as taking photographs and reporting on things which happen within Neighbourhood Networks, and also on personal stories.



At the last meeting we talked about the important future changes to PIP from DLA. One member went to interview a benefits adviser. There have been a couple of members who have written an article on the computer for the first time ever. After the reporting, some members come together to decide which articles and photographs go into each Echo and in which order. This is done by 'pegging out'



each article on a washing line so we can get an idea of what it will look like.

Another group of members are getting very skilled at using the computer programme "In Design" to put the Echo together. Some members volunteer to come into the office to fold the printed issues. Recently some members have volunteered to record a spoken version of the Echo. A member from each network comes in to collect a batch for their own area. Everyone is very happy with the new look Echo. There is much more involvement from the members putting the newsletter together. We really appreciate all the work members put into each issue. The new look Echo has been a great success and we have all learned a lot. The aim is for the Neighbourhood Echo to be completely run by members in the future.

March 2015

Health & Wellbeing

By Anne Marie Sullivan, Community Living Worker



One of our members had been having difficulties throughout the past year with various issues regarding her health, her family and her job. This led her to feel very down and she was not enjoying the things in her life that she used to enjoy.

I was very worried about her and asked her if there was anything we could do to help her. After offering my help on a regular basis she asked if I could visit her at home to discuss her health. I visited the member at home and she had to be gently coaxed to reveal what was troubling her. She then confided in me that she had been having a health issue for several years that she was very embarrassed about. I reassured her that the issue was not unusual and that the Doctor would be able to help her.

An appointment was made for her to visit her GP and she asked if I could accompany her to this as she was not sure how to explain the issue to her GP and was also very embarrassed to discuss what was wrong. I attended the appointment with her and helped her to explain the issue to the GP. She was reassured again by the GP that her problem was not at all unusual and she should not be embarrassed about it. The GP referred her to hospital for further tests.

The member was given an appointment for a

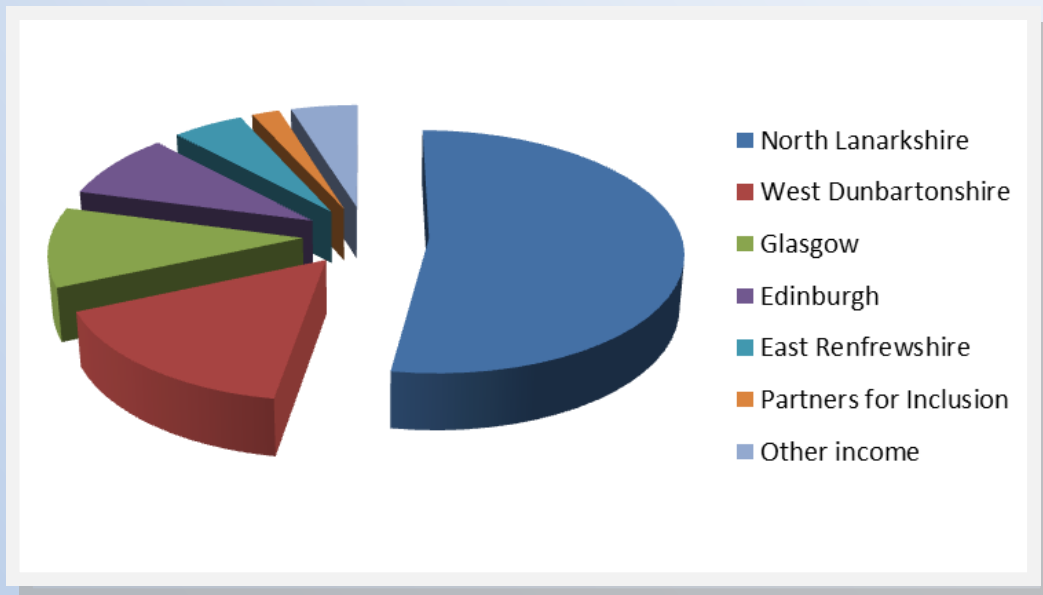
scan, then an appointment with a Consultant at the local hospital. We discussed the possibility of her attending for the scan on her own and having someone attend the Consultant appointment with her if she felt she needed this. After lots of reassurance and guidance the member attended the scan appointment successfully on her own. This then gave her the confidence to attend the Consultant appointment on her own to. She is now awaiting an appointment for a small surgical procedure that will hopefully provide a positive outcome for her.

This issue has been something that she has never felt confident or comfortable discussing before with anyone and could easily have been something she felt she had to live with for the rest of her life if she hadn't taken the steps to seek help and advice.

Through working with her on this issue I have noticed her confidence and self esteem improve dramatically and she is taking charge of other aspects of her life as well as her health and wellbeing. She has taken control of her own finances and is planning on saving money to have her home redecorated. She is also hoping to plan for a holiday which is something she felt she could only dream about due to her health issue.

April 2015

Finance



In the year 2015 income increased by 18.9% compared to 2014 to £641,970. We continue to have excellent relations with North Lanarkshire Council which is evident in the level of income received from them and is indicative of the commitment they have to preventative services in the area.

In 2015, the North Lanarkshire Mental Health network and the networks supporting young adults in transitions in North Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire continued to develop well. Development work continues in a variety of local

authorities and we are hopeful that 2016 will see new networks getting off the ground.

There was a surplus of £32,020 in the year which is an increase on the previous year. This was partly due to grants received from Awards from All, Bailey Thomas and North Lanarkshire Council for projects that were completed later in 2015. There is £261,099 in reserves which represents approximately 5 months cover of resources expended. Only 4% of reserves are restricted and the reserves position is within the OSCR recommendations.

May 2015

Office Move

In May of 2015 after much deliberation we eventually made the move to our new office space. When we took possession of the new premises it was a large single space which needed to be partitioned off to provide 2 separate meeting rooms and a large open plan office space, in which we built a drinks preparation area. We also needed to arrange for the space to be decorated to our taste, floor coverings laid and blinds to be fitted. Finally with the installation of all the IT and communications systems we were ready to move in. We also took the opportunity to replace our old mismatched furnishings with some new desks, chairs and storage cabinets.



The move was, as most moves are, a bit of an upheaval but despite a few teething problems it all went very well with people all pulling together to get the work done. The move was made much easier as a result of the flexibility shown by the main contractors who regularly changed their schedules to ensure that the work was completed on time. Charles and his team from IT Scotland carried out their work in their usual calm and collected fashion with nothing being too much of a problem which again relieved a lot of the stress from the move.

Thank you to all involved in the move, let's hope that we continue to have the same success in our new office as we have had up until now. Onwards and upwards!



June 2015

Festival of Common Wealth



It was a year of good fun, hard work and planning. Each network chose a country to adopt and the members had to learn a little about the people, the different cultures, the national dress and the exotic foods of each country. A year of researching, preparing and sewing to make all the costumes and festival floats. Members practiced and rehearsed weekly for their big part in the festival.

We expected it to be loud and colourful, but even we were totally amazed when it all came together on the day.

Traffic stopped and the parade was led down Scotland Street by our Bagpipe Player. In full Scottish dress, he looked magnificent as he led off the parade. The pipes were calling out to all, that we were here and our festival was getting started!!!!

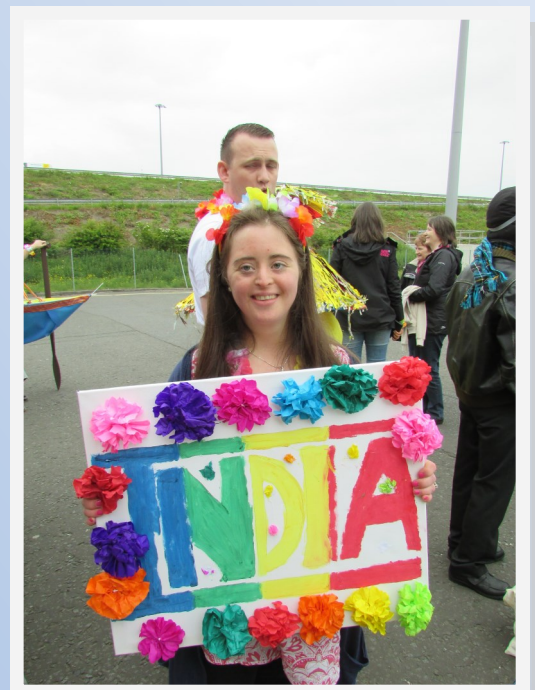
Everyone took their place in an explosion of music, colour and costume, and danced, walked or shimmied behind the piper. Proud of the hard work, proud of the costumes and proud of the efforts made.

Elephants, crocodiles and butterflies mingled with monkeys and ladies wearing grass skirts, closely followed by the hand decorated floats blasting out tunes from far off lands.

The huge handmade aeroplane maneuvered through the crowd being cheered on by people wearing garlands of flowers and waving the colourful flags of every country, and that was just for starters.

Scotland Street School awaited our arrival; a day of fun had begun. In every corner of this beautiful old school we organised a fun filled day of interaction and learning for all. There was an African band singing, lots of dancers teaching us Bollywood, African and modern moves. There was drum classes, t-shirt printing, plate painting, jewellery making classes the list goes on and on and to top all that, we were treated to the dance routines and songs which the members had learned and practiced to perfection for the event.

The parade, the costumes, the music, the dancing, the food was amazing, there were lasting friendships and connections made. The Festival of Common Wealth was truly a great day to remember!



June 2015

Festival of Common Wealth continued



July 2015

Ross Watson

Ross joined Neighbourhood Networks in 2013. Ross has Asperger's syndrome and mental health issues. This affects Ross's confidence to communicate and get involved within groups. Ross spent a lot of time alone and did not really have the opportunity to be involved in a group setting. Whilst at school and university, Ross also spent a lot of time alone.

In the three years that he has had the support of the network Ross has grown and has developed the confidence, with encouragement, to try new things. Ross lives in his own tenancy. He has great numeracy & literacy skills. Ross will now engage in conversations and open up when prompted. Ross has increased his level of independence by travelling to the fullest; he will confidently travel around Lanarkshire and Glasgow areas on his own.

Ross has been fully involved with Neighbourhood Networks activities, from presentations at universities to getting involved in referendum workshops to help network members understand it better. Ross has also been involved in the Marketing group, the Newsletter group and various other event planning forums for the organisation. Ross has completed

governance training and put himself forward for election as a Member trustee. Even though he has not been voted on by the members, he has the confidence to try again for a second year. Ross will develop and stand up and deliver presentations on his own.



Ross is a valued member of the network and people can rely on him to share his skills with other members. He is always willing to go above and beyond to help out. Ross's life is now full of activities and he has lots of friends within the networks. He will travel to other networks and join in with their activities. Ross no longer sits in the house all day on his own, he lives life to the full.

August 2015

Care Inspectorate



Neighbourhood Networks had an unannounced inspection on the 13th of August. The inspection and feedback was extremely positive and we were delighted to be awarded the following grades for the following inspection focus areas:



1.1 We ensure that service users and carers participate in accessing and improving the quality of care and support provide by the service. **Grade 6**

1.5 We respond to service user's care and support needs using person-centred values. **Grade 5**

3.1 We ensure that service users and carers participate in accessing and improving the quality of staffing and the service. **Grade 5**

3.4 We ensure that everyone working in the service has an ethos of respect towards service users and each other. **Grade 5**

4.1 We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of management and leadership of the service. **Grade 5**

4.3 To encourage good quality care, we promote leadership values throughout our workforce. **Grade 5**

Neighbourhood Networks have been described as leaders in the area of service user participation and our inspection report gave many examples of the work and culture of the organisation that promotes this so effectively. You can view the full report at: <http://ow.ly/d/3NXI>

In general this was a very positive inspection which highlighted the fantastic work that everyone does within the organisation and how much we value our members & staff. It also gives very clear and helpful advice to the organisation about ways to improve the service and help to make Neighbourhood Networks "the best it can be".

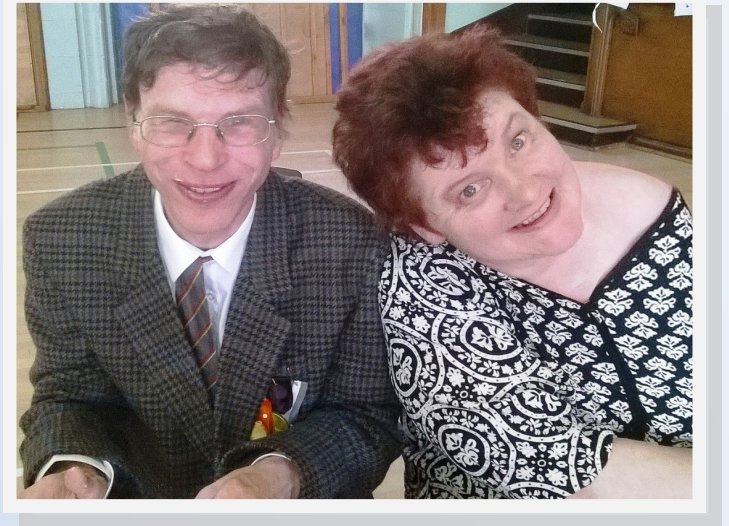


Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this inspection and for the highly valued feedback.

September 2015

Edinburgh Legacy

Dawn is 50 and 17 years ago she suffered a life threatening stroke which turned her world upside down. She has made a gradual recovery and now lives in her own home with visiting support from a team of carers.



Dawn realised she was always socialising in groups of people with physical disabilities who were equally isolated and hampered by their inability to travel independently. With this in mind she joined the South East Edinburgh Network in 2012 and quickly made a number of new friends.

Kenny is 48 years old and has a learning disability. He lives on his own and works in an old people's home. Kenny can simply jump on the bus for the short trip across to Dawn's flat to pop in for a coffee, a game of scrabble and a chat.

Now, for the first time in more than 16 years Dawn is able to go out to Karaoke at the weekend with a friend and not with someone who is paid to be with her. This might not seem like such a big change to many folk but to Dawn it means the world!

Kenny now has a life outside of work and his parents. With the support of the network he accessed wheelchair handling training which has made him much more confident supporting Dawn to get out and about.

Two people who wouldn't have met in other 'special' groups and clubs have come into contact through the network and have flourished in the diversity afforded by the model. This is life, not a support package.

October 2015

West Dumbarton Meets Midlothian

In September 2015 while one door was closing in Edinburgh another was opening just a few miles outside the capital. We launched two new peer support networks, in Midlothian, for young people leaving school and going to college or into training for employment. At the launch we thought that it would be important to ***hear from the experts*** – our members.

Daniel, Thomas and Jordan from the West Dumbarton Transitions Group bravely volunteered to take a step into the unknown and represent their network at the Midlothian launch. They worked together with Lauchlan to create their own PATH which literally painted a picture of the journey they had undertaken just over a year earlier.

Unfortunately Jordan was ill and not able to make the trip through to Edinburgh but Thomas and Daniel made sure he was there in spirit. Thomas said a lot about what he felt were the good things

about being part of the WD group and he spoke about the challenges around bringing different people together. Daniel was able to help Thomas describe how they worked together to solve problems and make sure all members get a chance to have their voice.

While Thomas shared his talent for speaking to people and telling stories, Daniel was able to share his talent for making models. He very generously brought along some of his models to show everyone and this got a fantastic reception.

There could be no better way to explain what might lie ahead for the Midlothian members. The young people and their families went away from the launch full of enthusiasm for the journey ahead.

Meanwhile the WD members travelled back into Edinburgh, had a late supper and settled down to their first ever night away from home in a hotel on Princes Street. What a great experience for everyone and just the beginning of the relationship between the young people's networks as they each continue to develop and grow.



November 2015

Carrie-Anne's Story

"Hi there, my name is Carrie-Anne and I'm a member of the Neighbourhood Networks Wishaw 3 network.



Since joining the network I have managed to begin the process of breaking down many personal boundaries that I had put in place to protect myself from the rest of the world. Boundaries such as socialising with new people and meeting them in unfamiliar surroundings, this may not sound like much but I was virtually housebound for 4 years.

Of course, Neighbourhood Networks isn't a miracle pill that has stopped me feeling anxious. However by attending the group, I feel as though I have not only gained the confidence to venture further than my own front door, but I have also found the 'want' to do it.

There is no magic wand but if through joining a network such as this one, Wishaw 3, you can find that confidence to move forward then that for me is like a light at the end of a very dark tunnel.

Neighbourhood Networks has allowed me to feel closer to my old self, than I have for a very long time. I've missed ME, who I am and what I'm all about. I've received the right kind of support and encouragement. Not the critical kind where I'm reminded again how I am "not helping myself"

I mean, that's kind of the point when you're deliberately leaning on the self destruct button, isn't it? I have often felt like saying to people, "Thanks for confirming that I'm doing a good job ruining my own life!!"

That made a huge difference to me. I started to wonder if the world was really so bad after all or if this was just another personal protection I had put in place, "If I don't do anything then nothing can go wrong!"

But I now see again, or I've remembered that life really is all about making

November 2015

Carrie-Anne's Story continued

mistakes and learning from them and I'm trying to adopt the "So what?" attitude. Really, what's the worst that can happen? If I try something and it doesn't go well, then I can always try again. It's no big deal.

Travelling by bus for example, I've done that more times than I can count and as of right now, I'm ok. This might be a different story next week but again, it goes back to what I'm going to be missing out on if I don't keep giving it a shot.

With my network, Wishaw 3, we all understand one another and our limitations. If one week myself or another member perhaps, is feeling far too anxious to leave the house, we will encourage them but never force them. We eliminate judgement, guilt and any negative feelings. We all know that there's enough of that going on within ourselves and our own personal struggles, so again, there's that mutual understanding that we have.

We actually look forward to meeting on our regular Wednesdays or any other days or nights that we have arranged together.



The pantomime for example, that's something I've not seen since I was a child and if I had been invited to attend one this time last year, I wouldn't have even entertained the thought. Yet, I've had a discussion about it with a few of the network members, or my friends as I now class them, and we really can't wait to go!

There are many changes that I've noticed within myself, I honestly could be here all day. I have a lot to thank Neighbourhood Networks for and myself too for giving them a chance to help me help myself.

The fact that I'm stood up here right now talking to you and even offering a self-congratulatory pat on the back, rather than the ritual 'slagging off' and self hatred is again, a huge step in the right direction.

Thank you very much for listening to me today.

December 2015

What's happening in Cumbernauld

Cumbernauld 1 has had a busy year raising money and keeping fit, as well as a weekly badminton class. 12 weeks before Christmas, Carol Sullivan, the Community Living Worker together with NL Leisure, started a healthy eating and exercise class. These classes were open to, and well attended by other members in Cumbernauld 2, Kilsyth and Airdrie networks. Everyone lost weight, with many losing over 5 pounds.

Following on from the success of our Tarzan swing across the Clyde where 6 members raised £800 for the Stroke Association in Scotland. We then had the "Swim the Channel Challenge" which involved swimming nearly 1500 lengths of our local pool. Members from Kilsyth and Cumbernauld 1 and 2 raised £400 for the Charity Aspire.



The Community Living Worker, Carol Sullivan says, "we all got so much satisfaction working as a team and losing weight and exercising together was very motivating as well as great fun". Following on from the classes everyone got free passes for the gym and members are looking forward to getting and keeping fitter in 2016.



Highlights of the Year





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](http://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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